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REMARKS

UPON

NAZARENUS.

Wherein the

Falsity of Mr. TOLAND'S

MAHOMETAN GOSPEL,

And his Misrepresentation of

Mahometan Sentiments,

In respect of

CHRISTIANITY,

Are set forth;

The History of the old *Nazareans* clear'd up,
and the whole Conduct of the First Christians
in respect of the *Jewish* Law, explain'd and
defended.

By THOMAS MANGEY, LL.D. *Rector of
St. Nicholas's in Guilford, and Chaplain to
the Right Reverend Father in God, JOHN,
Lord Bishop of London.*

The Second Edition.

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R. B. MARKS

USON

MAZARENU

Fellow of Mr. Edwards

MAZARENU

and his Millicentian of

MAZARENU Sentiments

MAZARENU

CHRISTIANITY

MAZARENU



The History
and the
in the
detached.

By Thomas Mangles, Esq. D. D. Rector of
St. Nicholas in Guildford, Chaplain to
the Right Reverend Father in God, Lord
Bishop of London.

MAZARENU

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Printed by J. G. Smith, at the
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Church Lane, London.



THE PREFACE.

THE Books that are wrote for the Christian Religion, as I conceive the following to be, do of all others need no Apology. But notwithstanding, I have reason to beg some excuse for this, having undertaken it, not only without the Encouragement and Importunity of Friends, but without the Privity of some, and against the Judgment of others, who thought that so weak and wicked a Book, as that of Nazareus, should be treated

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with a contemptuous Silence. But tho' I concurr'd with the latter in their Sentiments of the Author, yet I could not so in neglecting him. If the Question had been only about the Religion, or Learning of Mr. Toland, I know no Subject so little worthy of the World's Notice, or of my Examination; but I was apprehensive that a general Silence would give a Sanction to his Clamours. I thought, that to let him pass by unobserv'd, would give all the Unbelievers amongst us too great an Argument of uncontested Victory; and that it would be better, according to the Wise Man's Advice, to answer the Fool according to his Folly, than to let him go on triumphant in it. It seem'd to me a Reproach to our excellent Church, that so many bitter Invectives upon the Christian Religion, should go off with Silence, as well as Impunity: And there was reason to fear that the Churches abroad would be tempted to think that there was more of Mahometan Christianity amongst us than there

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there really is. However, as the matter stands, having almost of my own single Judgment undertaken the Work, I alone am accountable for the Mistakes and Omissions of it; the Honesty of my Intentions may probably answer for great part of them with Believers, and I crave no quarter from the Infidels.

I have said nothing upon the Canon of holy Scriptures, which though he frequently reviles in general, yet he hath not ventur'd to make his Objections against particular Books; whenever he is so good as his Word as to print his promis'd History of the Sacred Canon, he shall have me once more for his Adversary. I have gone no farther than his first Letter, being ready to own my Ignorance in Irish Language and Customs, if the Observations of the learned and judicious Mr. Wanley upon the Irish Manuscript should see the Light, he would have no reason to boast of his Skill in the former; but I design to be even with him another

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ther way, and hope e'er long to match his *Account of Irish Christianity with a practical View of the general State of it for the three first Centuries.*

He sets forth all the ill methods of arguing now in *Vogue*, and with as much Truth as good Manners lays them upon the Clergy; I know no Man fitter to number or exemplify all sorts of ill reasoning than himself; but as to the Charge it self I will venture to answer in the name of my Brethren, that if the taste of the World run upon religious Subjects as much as others, the Clergy would appear as skill'd and useful in their Writings as any of the other learned Professions. How many of these foul Arts will be laid to my Charge I cannot tell, I am not conscious of running wilfully into any of them; I have taken no Advantage of his ill method, or his blundering and inconsistent Expressions, but have been content if I could but find out his Meaning any way; I have been much indebted

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debted to his Preface for this, wherein he expresses himself more intelligibly than in his Book.

If in pursuing the Truths of our holy Religion my Zeal hath betray'd me to say any bitter thing unworthy of a Christian or a Clergyman, I shall very readily retract it; for though I detest Mr. Toland's Principles, and can very easily guess at his malicious Designs, yet I hate not his or any other Man's person; and I can heartily pray to God that he will give him Grace, if not too late, to repent, and to retrieve, if that were possible, the great Mischief he hath done to Christianity.



THE PREFACE

dedicated to his Preface for this, which
in the expression himself more intelligible
than in his Book.

If in pursuing the study of our
Religion, my Lord, I do believe, and
to say any thing more, I shall be
Christian or a Christian, I shall be
ready to say, for though I do
Mr. Toland's Principles, and the
easily given to his excellent Design, for
I have not in any other, I have not
for, and I can hardly say to God
that he will give him, if not too
late, to repent, and to return, if that
were possible, the great Misfortune
both done to Christianity.





REMARKS

UPON

NAZARENUS.

CHAP. I.



Have often thought that there are as credulous and contemptible Bigots in the Party of Infidelity, as any on the Side of Superstition, and am abundantly convinc'd of this by the late Conduct of some busy Unbelievers. There is no instance of Fraud falsely charged upon Priests, or of Credulity upon People, that these Agents for Infidelity are not guilty of in their Turn. They seem to govern their Judgments of Persons and Things by a Rule, as false as it is wicked, and the opposition of any Opinion to true Religion is with them the Measure

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and Standard of Truth. Whatever may unsettle our Faith, or discredit the Teachers of it, (no matter how improbable it be) is greedily swallow'd down, and with active, tho' commonly dull, malice propagated to their Followers. One must not wonder at the apparent Success of these their Designs, when it is consider'd, that they have all the corrupt Passions of human Nature on their Side, which being averse to the restraint laid upon them by the Gospel, are ready to fall in with licentious Principles. However this is to be wonder'd at, that these Unbelievers are not content with keeping their Discoveries to themselves; since as they bid defiance to the next World, they might fare somewhat better in this, if all others being ty'd down by the Doctrines of Religion, they were singly left to the Indulgence of their Vices, and discharg'd from the troublesome Restraints of Conscience. Their Fate were to be pity'd, if their Principles and Behaviour were not detestable, to see them labouring for an ill Cause with the vehemence of Confessors, and the penance and poverty of Martyrs, and undergoing so much drudgery in the Devil's Service, which, if otherwise apply'd, might get them Credit here and Rewards hereafter.

I did not expect, when I saw the Title Page of *Nazarenus* with the discovery of a Mahometan Gospel of *Barnabas*, to find any thing upon the Subject in the Book, but suspected either

either the Author to be in Jest, or that the Bookseller had made use of a known Expedient to sell of the Impression by a sham Title. Tho' Mr. *Toland's* Name was wrote in red Letters in Front, I could not even suspect him to be either so weak or wicked as to assert in earnest this *Mahometan* Gospel; I should have thought (and my Thoughts of him are neither unjust nor uncharitable) that he believes this Gospel as little as he reverences the other four. He could not fancy the World so credulous, as to come readily into a new Gospel that was but a Translation into *Lingua Franca* not 300 Years old, without any other internal or external Evidence of its being genuine but his own bare Word; and that too when the subject Matter tended to prove our whole Christianity to be no other than a gross Blunder.

However, I can easily account for his Folly by his Malice, and suppose that this his sham Discovery gave him an opportunity of emptying his common place Book, and lent him a Title to his long projected Design of unsettling the Canon of Scripture, overturning the Foundations of Christianity, and of pursuing that fashionable and threadbare Subject of abusing the Clergy. This last indeed seems to be the most labour'd part of his Work, but it is that part of all others, which I shall take the least notice of. I will spare my self the trouble of wiping off the Aspersions which he

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hath thrown so plentifully upon the Clergy ; because their Characters can suffer very little from the Reproaches of one who is an Enemy to their Faith as well as Function. And as for the business of Recrimination, that Christianity, which I am writing for, requires us to despise the Reproach, and pity the Slanderer.

I envy not a great Prelate of our Church the lean Credit of being so singularly excepted, and having his Praises mix'd with the Reproaches of his Brethren, and the Contempt, if not Disbelief, of his Master. His Lordship, as a Christian Bishop, should blush at the dangerous and disreputable Complements of an Unbeliever : Unless he thinks his Case to be the same with *Fabius Maximus*^a, whose Estate was particularly spar'd by *Hannibal*, when he destroy'd the Lands of the other Citizens, in order to expose him to Suspicion. If this be the Case, the Bishop should do something like what the faithful Citizen did upon that Occasion, and renounce these Favours from a common Enemy.

As he hath in the most outrageous manner abus'd the Clergy, so he hath past but a coarse Complement upon our civil Governours, in putting his Name to so many bold Assertions, and expecting from them Connivance or Encouragement. So many rude Insults upon

^a Liv. lib. 22.

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the establish'd Religion must betray in him one of the two, either a Contempt of their Authority, or the Hope of their Protection; if his Malice had not transported him too far, he might have consider'd that the Church of *England*, which is profess and swore to by the Government of this Nation, is a Branch of that Christianity which he reviles, and that those who have done so much against Popery may be brought to do as much against Infidelity. However, far be it from us to crave Aid of the Civil Power to defend us against any such Adversaries: we are able to contend for our Faith with its own Weapons; and tho' our Church deserves and is by Law entituled to Protection, yet its main Support (and a Support which it can never lose) is from the Strength of Truth and the Blessing of Providence.



CHAP. II.

Of the Title Nazarenus.

MR. Toland tells us, he chose the Title of *Nazarenus*, because the first and only Christians did for some time go by that Name. I would rather suspect another reason for his choice of the Word, because it was that, by which the Enemies of our Faith chose to call the first Believers; but let that be

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be as it will, I utterly deny that the Followers of *Jesus* took to themselves that Name from the beginning, but they were so nicknam'd by the *Jews* out of Scorn. Not one Christian Writer of Antiquity ever own'd the Name of *Nazarene*, but till their new Appellation at *Antioch* they seem to have been call'd Brethren and Disciples. ^b *St. Chrysostom* doth at least implicitly deny the Name of *Nazarenes*, by telling us that before they were call'd Christians at *Antioch*, they were call'd the *Persons of that way*, and seems to have Reasons from ^c several Passages in the *Acts* for his Assertion. I do confess that *Epiphanius* saith, that the Christians were first call'd *Nazarenes*, and is in all probability the first Author of this common Mistake; but this Father is not generally so exact in History, nor so happy in Etymology as to deserve credit against the probabilities of Fact, and the silence of more ancient Writers. Besides the Account he gives is very absurd, for he saith, the first Name of Christians was *Nazarenes*, and the next *Jessæi* from *Jesse*, the Father of *David*; the truth is, he seems to have confounded the Story that *Philo* tells of the *Essæans* in *Ægypt*, whom he mistakes for Christians when they were really *Jews*.

^b Τὸ το παύλῳ Κατ' ὅρθωμα, ἔνθα τετρακίλιοι ἔνθα πεντακίλιοι ἐπίστανται, ἰδὲν τοῦτον γέγονεν, ἀλλ' ἐστὶ τῆς ὁδοῦ μόνον ἥκον, ἐνθα ὁ χριστιανὸς ἀνομασίῳσταν. *Chrys. Hom. in Act.*

^c *Acts* ix. 2. xix. 9. xxiv. 14, &c.

But

But Mr. Toland can lay no stress upon the single Testimony of this Father, after the choice Character he hath given of him, p. 52.

The body of the Christians were never called *Nazarenes* but by their Enemies, being equivalent to *Galilean*; the *Jews* having so utter a Contempt of *Galilee* that it was a Proverb among them, *Can any good thing come out of Galilee*. Our Saviour and his Followers residing generally in that Country, and especially at *Nazareth* an obscure Town in it, were call'd promiscuously *Galileans* and *Nazarenes*; and St. Paul is for that reason ^d contemptuously call'd by *Tertullus* a Ringleader of the Sect of the *Nazarenes*. This Name was ever after retain'd by the *Jews* in their Books against our Faith, and they curs'd the whole Body of the Christians thrice every Day in their ^e publick Prayers under that Appellation. These Imprecations were compos'd some Years before the Destruction of *Jerusalem*, according to the Chronology of *Zemach David*, and were not conceal'd; but the Empire growing Christian,

^d Ἐδόκει τὸτο ἐπινείδισον εἶναι τὸ ἥ ναζωραῖον, διὸ καὶ τὸτο παρήγοι, καὶ λοιπὸν τὸτο πάλιν διέβαλλον αὐτὸν. Chrys. in locum.

^e Quod provocati à Domino ad pœnitentiam, & postea ab Apostolis ejus usque hodiè perseverant in blasphemis suis & ter per singulos dies in omnibus Synagogis sub nomine *Nazarenorum* anathematizant vocabulum Christianum. Hieron. Comm. in *Esaïam*.

Καταρώμενοι ἐν ταῖς συναγωγαῖς ὑμῶν τὴν πιστεύοντες ἐπὶ χριστὸν.
Just. Mart. Dialog. cum Tryph. vid. Buxtorf. Lex. Rabbin. in vocibus נָזָרִי & נָזָרִי.

the *Jews* fear'd they should fall under the Lash of the civil Power for these their wicked Prayers, and therefore pretended that they meant only a Sect of their own call'd *Nazareans* or *Minæans*, and impos'd so far upon ^f St. *Jerom* as to make him believe them.

As the *Jews* have still retain'd the Name in their Books, and never meant any Sect of their own, but the whole Body of Christians; it appears from hence that they invented this falsehood to save themselves from just Prosecution. The *Nazareans* were not at that time considerable enough to be so especially mark'd, being very few at that time, as St. *Austin* tells us; and besides as it is certain from themselves that they did actually curse the Christian Church, it follows, that if they likewise curs'd the *Nazarean* Sect, they must have had two distinct Imprecations in their Prayers.

The *Mahometan Arabians* have made use of the same Name in their Books to express the Christians; and have, as Mr. *Herbelot* observes, the same contumelious Meaning. I take it for granted therefore, and shall make proper use of it hereafter, that the Christians never own'd the Name of *Nazarenes*, but were

^f Usque hodie per totas orientis Synagogas inter Judæos hæresis est, quæ dicitur Minæorum & à Pharisæis nunc usque damnatur, quos vulgò Nazaræos nuncupant. *Hieronym. ad Aug.*

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only so nicknam'd by their utter Enemies the Jews out of Scorn and Reproach.

But I would farther observe that this Hypercritick hath blunder'd in his very Title; for if he would have denominatèd his Book by the Sect he defends, he should have call'd it *Nazaræus*, not *Nazarenus*. The former is the Name of his Heresy, and is so us'd by *Jerom*, *Augustin*, *Isidore of Sevil*, and most others. The Name is once or twice amongst a multitude of Citations promiscuously us'd, but that seems rather owing to the negligence of Transcribers than the judgment of the Author. ^s *Christianus Grammaticus* distinguisheth the two Words, and saith that *Nazaræus* is the Denomination of a Sect, *Nazarenus* of a Place, meaning *Nazareth*.

Now to help out Mr. *Toland* in the Pedigree of his Friends, the *Nazaræans* were so call'd not from *Nazareth*, but from a ^h word that was originally *Hebrew*, and in the *Hellenistick* Style signifies Separation or Holiness. Nothing is more usual than for Sectaries and Hereticks to pretend to more Holiness than

^s Est autem aliqua differentia inter Nazarenum & Nazaræum, Nazarenus à loco Nazaræus à Religione. Tom. 16. *Biblioth. Patrum*.

^h Ναζιραῖοι ὁ Θεὸς κεχωρισμένοι. Hesych. Ναζιραῖοι μόναχοι ἡγιασμένοι καὶ ἀφιερωμένοι τῷ Θεῷ. Phavorin. Ναζαρηὶδὲς ἂν ναζαρεὶ τῇ γαλιλαίᾳ. Ναζιραῖοι ὁ Θεὸς κεχωρισμένοι. Suidas. Nazaræi quos septuaginta sanctificatos, Symmachus separatos transtulerunt. Hieronym. *Comm. in Esaiam. vide Drusii notas in parallela sacra.*

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others profess and they themselves practise; and this seems to be the very case of the *Nazaræans*, who joining the external observances of the Law to the Profession of the Gospel took upon them this sanctify'd Appellation, being equivalent to our modern *Puritan*. They being very strict in their legal Purifications, took upon them this Name out of an assuming Confidence of greater Holiness and Perfection than the other Believers. From this Account, which I could confirm with many Proofs if necessary, I would observe two things: that the *Nazaræans* did not retain the primitive Name that was at first common to all Christians, but took a particular one to express their own formal and pretended Sanctity; the other thing that I would observe from hence is, how little Skill Mr. *Toland* hath in Learning, and how unfit to censure others for the want of it, when he hath so apparently mistaken the Meaning and Etymology of his own Title.



CHAP. III.

Of the Gospel of Barnabas.

THE Author of *Nazarenus* hath offer'd so weak Proofs for his Gospel of *Barnabas*, that one would suspect, that he meant

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meant not so much to prove this true, as to make it probable, that all the rest were false or uncertain. The Canon of Scripture was his Point in view, and there was not more Wickedness in the Design, than there was Folly in its Prosecution. It was ill Luck for him that his *Mahometan* Copy furnish'd him with no more likely Name than *Barnabas*; since there are some others which he might have offer'd if not with more Truth, yet with more Probability. The ancient Writers are so far from attributing a Gospel to *Barnabas*, that they do not number any by such a Name among the many spurious ones forg'd by Hereticks. *Eusebius* in his diligent Collection of Ecclesiastical Writers could not without the greatest negligence have omitted it, and tho' he mentions the false Gospels of *Peter*, *Thomas* and *Matthias*, hath not a Word of this. *St. Jerom* likewise in his large Catalogue of ancient Authors and their Works, tells us, that *Barnabas* wrote one Epistle for the Edification of the Church, which is a sufficient Argument that in his Opinion he had wrote no more.

But I forbear enlarging upon this Head, having reason to fear that the greater part of my Readers will take it for elaborate trifling to disprove this Gospel of *Barnabas*; they may, for ought I know, charge me with making Objections more considerable by their Answer, and may think it as much Folly in

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me to disprove these Assertions, as it is audaciousness in him to assert them. However I hope that too much Diligence and Watchfulness are in the Matters of Religion Errors on the right side; I flatter my self that my Pains will not be lost, if I can rob this Wasp of his Sting, and the Canon of Scripture may appear to have the more Certainty, when the Objections of its greatest Enemy are set in a true Light.

To return therefore to our Author. I have shewn, saith he, by unexceptionable *Authorities that Ecclesiastical Writers did anciently attribute a Gospel to Barnabas, whether there be any remains of it in this new found Gospel or not.* Now from this single instance one may judge of his Veracity and Modesty: for all these unexceptionable Authorities are contain'd in one single disputed Canon of Pope *Gelasius*; one would have expected that he had amass'd a number of unknown unobserv'd Testimonies, and that he had in his great Searches met with some Copies of ancient Writers, from whence the Name of *Barnabas* had been expung'd, as that of *Mahomet*, out of the Gospels; at least he should have endeavour'd to account for the silence of *Clement Alexandrinus* and *Origen*, who seem to have a particular respect for this Apostle. But both his *Mahometan* and *Irish* Knowledge fails him here, and as it is generally the Fate of Extremes to meet, he is forc'd to support

support his favourite Gospel by the weak Authority of one *Popish* Decree. But doth *Gelasius's* Decree attest this Gospel? No, but on the contrary condemns it for ⁱ Apocryphal; and the sense of the word *Apocryphal* signifying something wrote by an unknown Author, it doth declare, that it doth not belong to *Barnabas*.

However if we should allow this mention of *Gelasius*, though with dislike, to be some proof of it; yet the Testimony of an Author near five hundred Years after *Christ* is a very insufficient Proof for a new Gospel. But the Decree it self upon which he lays so much stress is disputed, and is thought by Criticks to belong as little to *Gelasius*, as this Gospel doth to *Barnabas*. We may say by this as the Woman in *Terence* did by her cowardly Friend, *Huic ipsi opus est patrono, quem defensorem paro*. I cannot but charge him with great Ignorance or sly Artifice in either not knowing or concealing, that this Canon in the Opinion of the ablest Criticks is not so old as the date it bears by some hundreds of Years. It cites some Writings later than the Year 494, in which it is supposed to be wrote, and is not only contrary to some Sentiments

^h Mittamus earum Scripturarum fabulas quæ *Apocrypha* nuncupantur, quod earum occulta origo non claruit patribus, à quibus usque ad nos autoritas veracium scripturarum certissimâ & notissimâ successione pervenit. *Aug. de Civ. Dei*, l. 15.

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of the *Roman Church* at that time, but to *Gelasius's* other uncontested Works. It is omitted in the Collections of Canons made after, and ⁱ *Dr. Cave* observes, that tho' there were several Controversies in which it might have interpos'd, yet it was never cited till the ninth Century, about which time he supposes it to have been forg'd. Thus the unexceptionable Authorities of *Mr. Toland* are reduc'd to the single Proof of a false Canon eight hundred Years later than the Fact it would prove: but as for his two anonymous Testimonies, till it is known whose they are, or in what Age they were wrote, I think them not worth Examination.

The very Name of *Barnabas's Gospel* was therefore utterly unknown to the Ancients, but it is not hard to account why it was mentioned afterwards. I verily believe that I have hit upon the Original of it from a Story forged in the Isle of *Cyprus*, which is told with little variation by most of the ^k Historians. The Bishops of *Cyprus* disowning all Subjection to the Metropolitan of *Antioch*, supported this their Claim of Independence by affirming that their Church was originally

ⁱ Bibliotheca liter.

^k Βαρνάβας ὁ ἀποστόλος τὸ λείψανον εὗρεθαι ἐν κύπρῳ ὑπὸ δένδρον κερκτίαν ἔχον ἐπὶ σήματος τὸ κτ' Ματθαῖον εὐαγγέλιον ἰδιόγραφον ὃ Βαρνάβας, ἐξ ἧς προφάσεως καὶ περιεγόνασιν κύπριοι τῷ αὐτοκέφαλον εἶναι τὴν κατ' αὐτὰς μητρόπολιν καὶ μὴ τελεῖν ὑπὸ ἀντιόχειαν. Theodor. lect. lib. 2. vide Niceph. Eccl. Hist. 1. 16. c. 37. Sigibert. Chronicon, ad annum 489, Cedren. Hist. comp.

founded

founded by St. *Barnabas*. One of them to make good this Proof, pretended that he was directed by a Vision to the Body of *Barnabas* with the *Hebrew* Gospel of St. *Matthew* lying upon his Breast. The Book was carry'd with great Pomp to the Emperor *Zeno*, and was by him adjudg'd as an argument of their being an independent Church. Now this Gospel being (*ιδιόγραφον τῆς Βαρνάβᾶ*) wrote by *Barnabas*'s own hand, might by a small variation of the Story be term'd his own, and is therefore in all probability referr'd to by this Canon that is so much later. ¹ A Critick in the last Age was impos'd upon so far by this Legend as to call it the Gospel of *Barnabas*, and affirm'd that it was presented to *Zeno*. I question not but the Story in travelling from *Cyprus* to *Rome*, did make that Gospel, which was only wrote by *Barnabas*, to be compos'd by him; but whatever becomes of this Conjecture, upon which I have no occasion to lay any great stress, I do affirm that no ancient Writer ever mention'd this Book, either under the Character of genuine or spurious. I would only desire the Reader to judge of the rest of Mr. *Toland*'s Arguments by the first step he hath here made, which, as weak as it is, is not the weakest; and to be assur'd that no real Proofs can be brought for

¹ Evangelium Barnabæ quod ipsius Chirographo signatum Alexandriam delatum est Zenone principe. *Ludovicius vivas notis in Augustin. de civ. Dei.*

this

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this or any other such Gospel, when the diligent Malice of an enrag'd Enemy, after the strictest search made by himself and Friends, could produce no better.



C H A P. IV.

Whether the Italian Translation of the Mahometan Gospel is the Gospel of Barnabas.

IF there was never any Gospel, whether true or spurious, known to the ancient Writers by the Name of *Barnabas*, as I have sufficiently prov'd, the whole Controversy about this *Mahometan* Translation of it is all over. However, let us suppose that there was once something of that kind; the next question is, whether Mr. *Toland* hath met with it. He tells us with modesty far beyond his usual Temper, but very short of what becomes his Assertion, that *this Gospel of the Mahometans is probably in great part the same Book with that of Barnabas*. I would observe that he neither gives his Author nor his Readers fair play in producing only a few Scraps, when the whole would have spoke better for it self. He cannot be suspected to have suppress'd the remaining part for fear of offending Christian ears, for the few choice

Extracts

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Extracts he hath made, containing Calumnies against *St. Paul*, and denying the Truth of our Saviour's Death and Resurrection, are sufficient, if true, to overturn the whole Christian Religion; I rather suspect his Laziness than his Caution, that he was conscious to himself, that more Citations might furnish a greater stock of Objections, and therefore he had a mind to save himself trouble.

I will not go about seriously to prove that this Book could not either in the whole or part of it be the Work of *Barnabas*, since I am well assur'd that no Man living would be convinc'd by the Arguments he hath brought for it. My Business is only to shew the Weakness of *Nazarenus* his Proofs, and to make out that this universal Undertaker, is an errant bungler, and by his way of Writing is as much a Heretick in Criticism as Religion. If he had follow'd the usual Methods of proving Books genuine, he should have prov'd the conformity of its Sentiments with the Author's other Behaviour and Character. He was wanting to his *Jewish* and *Mahometan* Apostle in not shewing that the Principles laid down in this his Gospel were the Subject of his daily preaching, that he had from the beginning dissented from *those ill Men that had preached Jesus to be dead and risen again*, that he never concurr'd with *Paul* in preach-

^m Vide p. 32.

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ing their Master to be the Son of God; but that the difference about this and the *Jewish* Law was, in flat Contradiction to St.ⁿ *Luke*, the true reason of their parting.

But I must add that if he would have proceeded regularly, he should have suggested some Reasons to prove the Epistle that hath been generally attributed to *Barnabas* to be spurious, and not content himself with saying that it hath been prov'd spurious by many able Hands, when it hath been acknowledg'd genuine by many more. It hath as many Attestations from Antiquity as any Book I know extant. ° *Clemens* of *Alexandria* hath cited many long Passages from it which are extant word for word in the present Copies. *Origen*, *Tertullian* and *Jerom* pass high Encomiums upon it, and tho' ^p *Eusebius* saith that it is to be plac'd (ἐν νόθοις) in the doubtful Writings, he doth not by that deny it to be the Work of *Barnabas*, but only that it was no part of Canonical Scripture.

The present Lord Archbishop of *Canterbury* hath thought it worthy of his Translation, and in his learned Dissertations upon it, hath remov'd the great Objection made against it from the many allegorical Interpretations which his Grace hath shewn perfectly agree-

ⁿ Acts xv. 37.

° Clem. Alex. Strom. 2. p. 396. item p. 410. & pædag. lib. 2. cap. 10.

^p Eccl. Hist. lib. 3. c. 25.

able to the Sentiments of that time. I am not afraid to call that Epistle a noble Remain of primitive Piety, and do suspect the latter part of it to be a part of that ancient (διδάχη) Doctrine scatter'd throughout the Apostolical Constitutions. However it must be spurious to serve *Nazarenus's* turn, because they are both so contrary to each other, the one being for the Law, the other against it, so that according to his own Confession they could not be compos'd by the same Hand. But I wonder how by the Rules by which he would prove this Gospel to be true, he can admit that Epistle or any other Book, to be doubtful and spurious. Shall a Book not only differing from, but contradictory to the known Principles of the pretended Author be receiv'd, and shall another agreeable to that same Author in every Point be condemn'd: shall the Gospel of *Barnabas* be admitted that was never before heard of, and hath not one ancient Attestation, and shall the other be rejected that hath all the Attestations that are possible: shall the one be call'd genuine that is only a barbarous Translation into a modern Language, and the other be question'd that is preserv'd in the purity of the original *Greek*? At this rate of thinking he must have set up a despotick Empire in Criticism, and make his own vicious Humour and incorrect Judgment, the measure of Truth and Falschhood.

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But *Nazarenus* hath still been wanting in another kind of Proof, and that is in accounting for the silence of all sorts of Writers about this Gospel. I know the Attempt to be impossible, but in his way of reasoning a small Conjecture would have serv'd; his unbelieving Admirers do not lay him under the hard Terms of Writing, with Demonstration or even Probability, but will be content with any thing, provided it be against Christianity. He should have shew'd, (or at least affirm that he had shew'd) how so considerable a Work full of so many Contradictions to the receiv'd Faith should have escap'd *Porphyry* and *Celsus*, Men not inferior to *Nazarenus* either in Malice or Curiosity; or how it came to pass that the *Ebionites* whose Sentiments it contain'd, should never once use it, but either that of the *Hebrews*, as the Ancients generally agree, or, as ^a *Theodoret* tells us, a pretended one of *Peter*. It is an uncommon Fate that this Book hath gone through, that it should for so many Ages escape the Knowledge of Foes and Friends, Orthodox and Hereticks, without approbation on the one side, or dislike on the other, and at last fall into Mr. *Toland's* lucky Hand; and I cannot but congratulate this Gentleman's Happiness that having declar'd for two sorts of Christianity, *Jewish* and *Mahometan*,

^a Hær. lib. 2.

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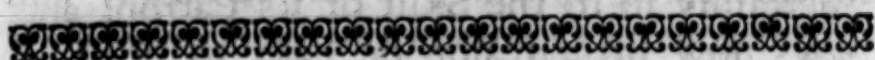
he hath met with a new Gospel that equally supports both. I must conclude with observing that he hath been wanting in all the regular methods of Proof, but yet I will do him the Justice to believe that he would not have been wanting in any of them, if his needy Subject had furnish'd them. How happy were it for him if he could find any part of the sacred Canon no better guarded!

However he hath offer'd at some Proof for this his Gospel, and that is in producing a short Passage out of the 39th Baroccian Manuscript, which, he saith, he found almost in terms there. The words are these, *Barnabas the Apostle saith, that he gets the worst of it who overcomes in evil Contentions, because he thus comes to have the more Sin.* I desire the impartial Reader to cast his Eye upon the Original in the Margin for a Specimen of Mr. Toland's Skill in Greek which he hath falsely translated. For the Greek word doth not there signify to come to, but to rush on, or proceed; so that the Sense of the Words, which he hath mistaken, is that the Conqueror in evil Contentions is encourag'd to proceed, and by this means runs into greater Sin. This inaccurate Translation, tho'

[†] Βαρνάβας ὁ ἀπόστολος ἔφη, ἐν αἰμασί πονηρίαις ἀθλιώτερος ὁ νικῶν, διότι ἐπιέχειται πλείον ἔχει τὴν ἁμαρτίαν, the Lexicographers may be consulted about the sense of the word; ἐπιπῆω irruo, προσβάλλω. Vide Steph. Thes. Lingua Græca, ἐπιέχομαι, ingruo, invado; Budæus Comm. Lingua Græca; tho' probably the true reading is ἀπέχει.

not material to the Merit of the Book, yet is certainly so to the Skill of its Patron, and shews how little reason he hath to boast of his Skill in learned Languages, when he hath mistaken the only *Greek* Passage of his favourite Gospel.

But to proceed, I would observe that this Passage is not cited from any Gospel by name, and that Dr. *Grabe* who supposeth it to be cited from the last Gospel of *Barnabas* hath no other Reason for his Supposition, but a forward Guess of his own; since it might as probably be taken from a lost part of his Epistle, which is not entire as we now have it. But let Dr. *Grabe's* Guess be true, can any one imagine, that Mr. *Toland* should be so far wanting to himself as not to produce the parallel Words out of the *Mahometan* Copy; is he so bad a Master of Controversy, as having but one conclusive Argument, not to make use of it? I must say therefore, and say it with the utmost assurance, that his omitting the Passage is a strong Presumption, that it was not in his Copy, and that he hath not given so good Proofs of his Ingenuity or Skill in this Matter, as to be believ'd upon his own bare Assertion. He hath still laid some farther stress upon the *Mahometans* receiving the Gospel, the Evidence of which shall be consider'd in the next Chapter.



CHAP. V.

Whether the Mahometans read any Gospel.

I Am far from thinking (how malicious soever *Nazarenus's* Design may be in proving it) that it can be any Prejudice to Christianity to believe, that the *Mahometans* do receive all, or any part of our Scriptures; it is in some sort an Attestation of its Truth, that the profess'd Enemies of our Religion do not wholly disallow those sacred Books in which it was first deliver'd. It may be by a wise Providence so contriv'd, that their owning some Facts of Christianity, may be an introduction to the rest, and bring them, in God's good time (which may *He* of his Mercy so compleat his Kingdom, as to hasten) to the *Truth as it is in Jesus*. I am so little afraid of the tendency of this Assertion, that I could have heartily wish'd that better Proofs had been brought for it. Sir *Paul Rycant* mentions a Sect among the *Turks*, which do acknowledge not only the Certainty of our Saviour's coming into the World, but his divine Nature and Character; they are a sort of Believers in disguise, but are restrain'd by human Fears from declaring it. But these their Sentiments

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timents being contrary to the *Alcoran*, and to the general Opinions and Practice of their Brethren, are no more an authentick Attestation of *Mahometism*, than the Opinions of some Deists and Hereticks amongst us are of Christianity.

I will venture to affirm, that though the *Mahometans* do acknowledge a Gospel to have been formerly sent from Heaven to *Jesus*, whom, by the way, they suppose to be the only Writer of it, yet they allow that Gospel no force or authority, they produce no Testimonies from it, nor do any of them read it as a sacred Book.

Mr. *Toland* to prove the contrary, observes, that according to the *Mahometans*, there were six original Institutions deliver'd to the World by *Adam*, *Noah*, *Abraham*, *Moses*, *Jesus* and *Mahomet*: and that the Christians agree with them in all but the last. This Observation is as false, as it is impertinent; for the ancient Writers, and they are herein follow'd by the Moderns, allow only four, and generally make this quadruple Institution an Emblem of the four Gospels. For this reason, saith *Irenæus*, *four general*

Ἡ δὲ τῶτο τέσσαρες ἰδόντες καθολικαὶ διαθήκαι τῇ ἀνθρωπότητι, μία μὲν ἔστι κατὰ Νῶε ἐπὶ τῷ τόξῳ, δευτέρα δὲ τῇ Ἀβραάμ ἐπὶ τῷ σημείῳ τῷ πεντάγωνῳ, ἢ τρίτη δὲ ἡ νομοθεσία ἐπὶ τῷ Μωσείῳ· τέταρτη δὲ ἡ τῷ Εὐαγγελίῳ. Ἡ δὲ τῷ Ἰησοῦ Χριστῷ. l. 3. c. 11. Ἡ δὲ τῶτο καὶ Εὐαγγέλιον τέσσαρες ἀναγινώσκουσιν· τὸν Εὐαγγέλιον τοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ τὴν ἀνθρωπότητα, ἡ παιδαγωγία τοῦ Εὐαγγελίου νόμοις. *Methodius in Conv. decem Virginum.*

Covenants

Covenants were given to Mankind: one at Noah's Flood in the Rainbow, another of Abraham by the sign of Circumcision; the third was the giving of the Law in the time of Moses, and the fourth, that of the Gospel by Jesus Christ. Some others of the Fathers agree in this number, tho' they differ in the Persons, making *Adam* very improperly the Author of an Institution, and leaving out *Abraham*. His Ignorance in Christian Writers, whom he professes to be weary of, may be excus'd, but it is unpardonable in a *Mahometan* Advocate to be no better acquainted with his *Alcoran*, which recites these Authors of new Institutions in another way, and puts *Ishmael* and *Isaac* in the number. *Say ye, we believe in God in what he inspir'd into us, in what he hath inspir'd into Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob, and the Tribes, in what was taught Moses, Jesus, and the Prophets.* Though it is to be confess'd, that the blundering Author of the *Alcoran* varies from this recital in the next Chapter, and numbers many more.

To prove that the *Mahometans* receive the Gospel, he observes, that tho' they believe 104 to be sent from Heaven, yet four of them are only obligatory. He quotes the Names of several Writers, to prove this particularly in respect of the Gospel, but he ar-

^t Alchoran, Chap. 2.

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tificially omits their words. He doth not usually omit the opportunity of decking the Page with large Citations, but his Authors fail'd him here, for they all put together, prove only that a hundred and four were once sent from Heaven, but make no distinction in favour of the Christian Gospel. I will produce at length the words of *Reland's Theology*^v. *These Books are in number 104, whereof God sent ten to Adam, fifty to Seth, thirty to Enoch, ten to Abraham, one to Moses, one to Jesus, which is the Gospel, one to David, which is the Psalter, and one to Mahomet, which is the Alcoran; he that renounces these Volumes, or doubts of them, or part of them, is certainly an Unbeliever.* The Profession likewise of *Jacob ben Sidi*^w, upon which he lays much stress, is as follows. *Let them believe in the Scripture which was sent to the Apostles, which is by their common Opinion, divided into 104 Books, whereof ten were sent to Adam, fifty to Seth, thirty to Enoch, ten to Abraham, the Law to Moses, the Psalter to David, the Gospel to Isa, or Jesus, lastly the Alcoran to Mahomet.* From these Citations, the *Turkish Canon of Scripture* appears very different from what *Nazarenus* hath represented it, the Gospel is acknowledg'd in common with the

^v Adr. Reland. rel. Mahammed. c. 4.

^w Gabriel Sionita de urbibus & moribus orientalibus. c. 14.

Fables and Fooleries of *Adam, Seth, Enoch*, &c. and it is of all together, not of the four distinctly, that he who doubts is declar'd an Unbeliever. I do therefore from this, and other Reasons, aver, that he hath utter'd a Falshood, in saying, that it is the constant and general belief of *Mahometans*, that these four Books constitute the Foundation of their Religion, or that *Mahometism* is generally call'd the Religion of four Books.

But I cannot see the necessity of running to old Authors for the Proof of a Fact, wherein information might be had from living Witnesses. *Nazarenus* to prove this his favourite Point, should have apply'd to his Correspondents of *Wit and Worth* out of Europe, (for I guess he means some in *Turkish Asia*) he should have desir'd his *Mahometan* Friends on this, or the other side the Water, to give it under their hands, or get an authentick Declaration from the *Mufti*, that they do receive, and daily read the Gospel of *Barnabas*, or some other. But he is, and ever will be, wanting in such Evidence; and it is probable that the Mussulmen will no more thank him for misrepresenting their Faith, than we shall, for libelling ours.

Tho' *Mahomet* frequently refers to the Gospel, yet he doth no where direct, or permit his Followers to use it, but inculcates to his Readers, that the Substance of the old Scriptures is contained in the *Alcoran*, we

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have taught in the Alcoran all that is profitable for the Salvation of Men ^x. And in another place, he sets aside the necessity of all other Books, by assuring them, that *this Book* (speaking of his own) *containeth our Commandments, and all that we heretofore commanded the Prophets* ^y.

^z Fryar Richard, in his judicious Confutation of the *Saracens*, observes, that they *affirm'd that the Alcoran contain'd all that was good in the Gospel, and that there was no more need of it.* So that tho' *Mahomet* and his Followers allow the Gospel to have been formerly sent from Heaven to *Jesus*, (for that is their gross way of expression) yet they assign it only a temporal use, and believe that whatever is useful in it, is transcrib'd into their *Alcoran*. ^a Mr. *Herbelot* observes, that the *Mahometans* are so far from reading our sacred Books, that they have wrote to prove the unlawfulness of citing any Passages from thence. But whatever may be thought in general of their receiving a Gospel, it doth manifestly appear, that they knew nothing of this of *Barnabas*. Their common Opinion is, as I said before, that the Gospel was sent from Heaven, and that *Jesus* himself,

^x Chap. xxx.

^y Chap. xliii.

^z Φασὶ τὸινυν, ὅτι τὸ ἀλκοράν διεδέξατο τὸ εὐαγγέλιον, καὶ πᾶν ὅπερ ἦν ἀγαθὸν ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ ἔταξεν ὅλον ἐν τῷ ἀλκοράνῳ εἶναι, ὡς ἡδὴ μὴ εἶναι χρεῖαν τοῦ εὐαγγελίου, Cap. xvii.

^a *Bibliothèque Orientale in voce Taourat.*

not any of his Apostles, was the Publisher of it.

The difference that there appears to be between the sacred Books us'd by the Christians, and the pretended Citations from them in the *Alcoran*, is no proof that the *Mahometans* have any particular Copies of their own. The abovementioned ^b Mr. *Herbelot* observes, that *all that the Mussulmen cite from the Gospel, whether doctrinal, or historical, hath some foundation in the same Gospel, but they give it always some new turn, that it may not appear borrow'd from the Christians, and to persuade the ignorant that they have the true Originals in their hands, which notwithstanding they could never yet produce.*

If this matter be carefully examin'd, we may find the footsteps of our own true Gospels in the *Alcoran*, blended with the gross forgetfulness of the Impostor, and heretical Opinions of *Nestorians*. *Nazarenus* is very artificial, but much mistaken, when he insinuates that they were extracted from the first Originals of Christianity. For it manifestly

^b Il est vray de dire, que tout ce que les Musulmans citent de l'Evangile, soit Historique, soit Doctrinal, a quelque fondement dans le meme Evangile, mais ils lui donnent toujours quelque nouveau tour, afin qu'il ne paroisse pas, qu'il est emprunté des Chretiens, & pour persuader aux ignorans qu'ils ont entre leurs mains les vrais originaux qu'ils n'ont cependant jamais pu produire jusqu' a present. *Id. in voce Inghil.*

appears

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appears from the way of expression, that they were taken from the Scriptures of that time^c, as they were disguis'd and misinterpreted by the Hereticks in *Arabia*. Thus the frequent appellation of *Jesus the Son of Mary*, which is the constant style of the *Alcoran*, was never known to ancient Writers, and was apparently taken from the *Nestorians*, who would have the Blessed Virgin call'd the^d *Mother of Christ*, and not the *Mother of God*. The *Mahometans* in representing the Christian Trinity, suppose the Virgin *Mary* to be one of the Persons; which must have been owing to the Calumnies of the *Nestorian* Hereticks, who were very active in giving an ill turn to the respect paid to her by the Christians at that time, which indeed was grown to a too great height in the fourth Century; in some Parts of *Arabia*, as *Epiphanius* tells us, the Name of *Associators* which is given to the

^c Fatemur enim esse Muhammedismum confutum non ex Judaismo tantum & Gentilismo, sed & Christianismo, & δανόμεναι licet, & ut plurimum hæreticâ pravitate ita corrupto, ut imperitioribus verè θανάσιμον μολίκεστον esse poterit. Nec mirandum est in eâ quoque Religione haud obscuras veteris Christianismi apparere stricturas, cujus principium Alcoranus ex ipsis quoque sacræ Scripturæ expressis verbis constat.—— Ut nulli ambigamus, quin cuique obvium sit futurum, neminem post hominum memoriam, in novâ cudendâ Religione ita vasrum fuisse & versipellem, qui cum de suo vix pauca addiderit, sed vel ex utriusque testamenti libris vel Judæorum traditionibus omnia mutuârit, eadem cœlitus ad se delapsa ausus fuerit tanto cum successu mentiri. *Hotting. Hist. Oriental. l. 2. c. 4. vide Joh. Damascen. de Heres. item Anastas. Bibliothec.*

^d Χριστοτόκος & Θεοτόκος.

Christians

Christians by the Impostor, is apparently owing to the false Suggestions of the same Hereticks, who call'd the Orthodox Doctrine Tritheism^e. So likewise *Nestorius* blasphemously calling our Saviour (Θεὸς ὁργανον) the *Instrument of God*, and by that expression, excluding him from all inherent Virtue and Power, gave occasion to the *Mahometans* affirming, that *Jesus* did no Miracles by himself. 'God cleans'd the Lepers, and rais'd the dead by *Jesus*, he created a Bird by him, and others of that sort, but this must be attributed to God, not to Man, who was the Instrument. There are many other instances of a Conformity of Sentiments between the *Alcoran*, and the *Arian* or *Nestorian* Hereticks; and I venture positively to affirm, that from their Calumnies and Misrepresentations, and not from any ancient Originals, *Mahomet* borrow'd his Christian Notions.

I cannot forbear adding another Proof of this, from the assistance that the Impostor had from a Renegado Monk. *Nazarenus*, for the Honour of *Mahomet*, denies this Fact, and impudently observes, that *Sergius* hath serv'd a world of fine purposes. I will readily grant, that the Moderns have mistaken the true Name of this Monk, which indeed is not call'd *Sergius* by any of the *Eastern* Wri-

^e Theodoret. Hær. fab. lib. v. f. Comm. in Alcor. vide Warneri Compendium. P. 9.

ters,

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ters, but they all agree in the Fact, ^s that he lent his Assistance to the Impostor. ^h *Bartholomæus Edessenus* calls him *Pachyras*, and Fryar *Richard*, *Bahiras*, both which are nearly the same in the *Eastern* way of Pronunciation. The learned Dean of *Norwich* observes, that this word signifying a Camel, that for some merit was discharg'd from all future Service, was significantly bestow'd by the *Arabians* upon this Monk, and therefore supposeth, with great Probability, that he was called by both Names, which removes all the difficulty.

To summ up the evidence of this matter, it appears very plain, that Mr. *Toland* hath not brought any proof, that the *Mahometans* read his Gospel of *Barnabas*, or any other. They reckon the Christian Gospel among the 104 inspired Books, but think the substance of them all contain'd in their own *Alcoran*, which, without any other Books, they suppose to contain all things necessary for Salvation; and their different representation of some Facts, proves not that they have any

ε' Ερχόμενος ὃ ἐν Παλαιστίνῃ συναντήσας τῷ Ἰουδαίῳ τε καὶ Χριστιανοῖς, ἔειπεν ἐξ αὐτῶν τινὰ γραφικά. — αὐτὴ δὲ (*Chadigha Mahammedis uxor*) ἔχουσα μοναχόν, ἀπὸ κακοπιστίαν ἐξέλειπον ἐκείνῃ ὄντα, φίλον αὐτῆς, ἀνήγειρεν αὐτῇ πάλιν, &c. *Cedrenus Histor. compend. vide Zonar. Annal. Tom. 3. item Richardi confut. cap. xiii.*

^h Καὶ ἡ μὲν ἀλήθεια ἀπὸ τῆς διδασκαλίας τῆς Παχυρᾶς πρὸς τὸ Μυχαμίτ. *Le Moyne varia sacra, p. 316. Προσηγορήθη γὰρ αὐτὴ τις Ἰακωβίτης ἐν ὀνόματι Βαχίρας. Richardi confut. cap. xiii.*

differe-

different Copies of our Gospel, but only that they were misguided by the Prejudices of that *Nestorian* Monk, whether call'd *Sergius*, or *Babira*, by whom *Mahomet* was assisted. I would add, that the *Italian* Translation of *Barnabas* hath not observ'd the *Mahometan* Style, in rendring it *Barnaba Apostolo suo*, *Barnabas* his Apostle; for the *Mahometan* *Arabians* call the Followers of *Jesus*, *Havarionn*, which signifies Whiteners, but never *Alrossoul* Apostles, which Name, as sacred, they bestow upon the Followers of *Mahomet*. The Observation I would make from hence, is, that this *Mahometan* Translator hath as little skill and accuracy, as his Patron.



CHAP. VI.

Of the Integrity of our present Scriptures.

THough the *Mahometans* own our Scriptures in the gro'ss, yet lest they should be press'd by any Arguments from thence, they have found out a Subterfuge to evade the force of them, by pretending that these our Scriptures are chang'd and corrupted. The ⁱ Dean of *Norwich* hath most judiciously ob-

ⁱ *Life of Mahomet.*

serv'd, that this Conduct is much wiser than that of our *Socinians*, who, with *Mahomet*, denying the Holy Trinity, and the Divinity of our Saviour, yet still allow the holy Scriptures, as now in our hands, to be genuine and uncorrupted, with which their Doctrine is in the most manifest manner totally inconsistent. *Nazarenus* hath therefore scorn'd the mean Sophistry and low Artifice of this sort of Unbelievers; and more consistently with himself, hath espous'd the *Mahometan* Sentiments in this particular. He hath in great measure made their Objections his own, and thinks it no Objection against *Barnabas's* Gospel, that there are visible Interpolations in it, *because no Gospel is exempt from them.*

I suppose he brings the omission of our Saviour's Genealogy in the *Nazaræan* Gospel, and the *Irish* Manuscript, as a proof of interpolated Scriptures; and that he may not come behind any Mussulman of them all, in their daring, though stupid Conjectures, he proposeth it as a grave Query for Travellers, whether any Copies of the Holy Scriptures, with *Mahomet's* Name in them, can be found to confront with ours.

As to the Genealogy, it is sufficient to observe of it, not only that it is in all the old Versions, and *Greek* Manuscripts seen by Dr. *Mills*, but it hath withal the attestation of the earliest Ages. *Africanus* endeavour'd
to

to reconcile the difference between the Genealogies of St. *Matthew* and St. *Luke*, and his method of accommodating it is preserv'd by ^k *Eusebius*. ¹ *Cerinthus* and *Carpocras*, who were Hereticks in the latter end of the first Century, made use of this very Genealogy (a sure proof of its Existence at that time) to prove that *Jesus Christ* was a mere Man, and truly born of *Joseph* and *Mary*. The omission of it in the Gospel of the *Nazareans* is no Proof against it, because they us'd not the Gospel of St. *Matthew*, as hath been thought by some, but a particular Gospel of their own. The separation of it in the *Irish* Manuscript, might as well be occasion'd by the Mistake, as the design of the Transcriber; but let that be as it will, it is not so ancient as singly to raise any Question about the Text.

But as to the erasing of *Mahomet's* Name, or the changing of *Peryclete* for *Paraclete*, it is so sorry a piece of Criticism, that it deserves no answer. The Conjecture was however so fuitable to *Nazarenus's* Skill in *Greek*, and Respect for Christianity, that he could not discommend it ^m. I would only observe of it,

^k Eccl. Hist. lib. i. c. 7.

¹ Ο μὲν γὰρ Κήρινθος καὶ Καρποκράτης πρὸ αὐτῶν ἡρώδης δὴτιν παρ' αὐτοῖς διαγγελίῃ διὰ τὴν ἀρχῆς, ὅτι καὶ Ματθαίου διαγγελίῃ διὰ τὴν ἡνολογίας βέλον) παρῆσαν ἐν στίγματι Ἰωσήφ καὶ Μαρίας εἶναι Χριστόν. Epiph. Hær. 30.

^m Vide p. 13.

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that this wretched Pun hath as little support from the Language, as it hath from Truth; for not to mention that *Periclyte*, or Περικλυτός is no Scripture Word, I deny, and challenge him to prove it, that it answers to the Sense of the *Arabian* Word *Muhammed*.

But because *Nazarenus* sily insinuates, that Travellers in their searches may find many more various Readings and Interpolations in the Scriptures, I cannot think it unseasonable to prevent the Mischief he designs; by offering those general Arguments that may assure us of their Integrity.

The Holy Scriptures are not only in a better condition than any other old Books, but are, in the nature and subject matter of them, free from all suspicions of design'd Corruptions. It was not possible, but they being to be preserv'd by human Arts, and to be frequently transcrib'd by lazy or ignorant Writers, might admit of some literal Variations, but they are none of them such as corrupt or disguise the comfortable Truths there reveal'd; there are few of these various Readings, but their Original may be accounted for, from the similitude of Letters or Sounds, or from some such Cause. But I challenge *Nazarenus* to point out any, that favour the Designs of Priests, or pervert in any degree the nature of our Institution. The *Jews* have been charg'd by
the

theⁿ Christians with altering the sacred Text, but the agreement of it in the main parts with the *Greek* Translation, that is older than our Saviour, sufficiently acquits them. Divine Providence, by this early Translation of the *Hebrew*, prevented all just suspicions of Fraud, and hath likewise by this means provided for the greater Purity of the Old Testament; for the *Greek* Version being older than most of the variations of the *Hebrew* Text, can easily bring them to the primitive Standard.

The *Jews* about our Saviour's time, from a mystical way of Interpretation, which they were very fond of, and which is an Enemy to all accuracy in Languages and Criticism, neglected very much their Copies, which may account for some differences in *Josephus* and *Philo* from our present Scriptures. But after they were engag'd in dispute with the Christians about the Truth of the Messiah, they stuck very closely to the Letter of the Text, and were so accurate, in the numbring of Words and Letters, that it was not possible that any Alterations should come in after. This appears true in fact, since the *Hebrew* Text hath scarce receiv'd any Alteration these 1300 Years, from the exact agreement of it with St. *Jerome's* Translation.

The New Testament being wrote in a better known Language, and being more intelli-

ⁿ Justin. Martyr. Dialog. cum Tryph.

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gible and obvious in the sense of it, was not liable to near so much Variation as the *Hebrew*. But this appears farther true, because the Copies of the Gospels were, as soon as they were wrote, dispers'd over the most distant parts of the World.

The early dispersion of the New Testament, wherever the Faith was preach'd (and that it was in forty Years over the whole *Roman Empire*) must remove all suspicion of Fraud, since there could be no Interpolation, but many hundreds in very distant Places must concur in the Cheat. The Christians have not done with their Scriptures, as the *Mahometans* have done with their *Alcoran*, but have openly expos'd them to publick view, and trusted them in the meanest hands. They were likewise read publickly in their daily Worship, so that no Change could be made, but every one must be appriz'd of it; and their nicety upon the least variation, appears from a Story that ° St. *Austin* tells, that a Passage in *Jonah* being read by the Bishop's Order in *Jerom's* Translation, the hearing only of one strange Word, rais'd a Tumult in the People.

° Nam quidam frater noster Episcopus, cum lectitari instituisset in Ecclesiâ cui præest interpretationem tuam, movit quiddam longè aliter abs te positum apud Jonam Prophetam, quàm erat omnium sensibus memoriæque inveterarum, & tot ætatum successionibus decantatum: factus est tumultus in plebe, maximè Græcis arguentibus & inclamantibus calumniam falsitatis. *Aug. Epist. ad Hieron.*

But

But farther, as the Rules of our holy Faith forbid all manner of Fraud, so the subject matter would not admit of it. If the Christians had been so wicked as to change any part of their Text, they would have done it in some particular for the secular Advantage and Honour of their Institution. They would have soften'd or accommodated the Difficulties of their Faith, and made it more acceptable to that Pride of Understanding and Corruption of Will which are predominant in Mankind: They would have qualify'd the severe Duties of Self-denial and Mortification, which put them to so much trouble in their Practice, or expose them to Scandal and Reproach in their omission. ^P Fryar *Richard*, in his Confutation of the *Saracens*, judiciously observes, that the Christians, if they had taken this wicked Liberty of altering their Scriptures, would not have left there so disreputable a Fact as the Crucifixion of their Master; nor, as he saith, could it be matter of human Invention, that the same Person should, by his Sufferings and Exaltation, be both God and Man.

Ρ "Ετι πῶς ὁ λόγον προθεῖναι τῆς Χριστιανῆς ἐν τῇ εὐαγγελίῳ τῇ Χριστὸν καὶ σωζωθῆναι ἐ ἀποθανεῖν, ἀληθῶς ἐντιμότερον τοῖς ἀνθρώποις δοκῆναι ἢ μηδαμῶς ἐσωζῶν, καὶ παντάπασιν ἀσυμφωνεῖ ἢ καὶ Θεὸν τὸ αὐτὸν εἶναι, ὡς ἐν τῇ εὐαγγελίῳ λέγει. Ποίαν δ' ἀνέχῃ τὴ ἀκολουθίαν δύο τοσούτων ἀλλήλων ἀξίφορα ἐν τοῖς ἰδίῳις δόγματιν ὑποδέσξῃ ὡς δηλαδὴ τὸ αὐτὸν ἐ ἀληθῆ γε εἶναι Θεὸν καὶ ἀληθῶς τιθηκέναι. Cap. iii.

The

The great Analogy and Proportion of one part of our Faith with the other, is likewise a certain Evidence that the Scriptures are not corrupted. These Changes must have been made to favour some novel Opinion, which would have been dissonant to the rest. Such an addition would have stood out from the rest of the Building, and by its disproportion have shew'd that it was not the Contrivance of the first Master-workman. There is certainly an exact Harmony between the several Doctrines of the Gospel, and there would need no better proof of the Truth or Falsity of any Opinion, than its agreement or disagreement with the rest. I could make this out by many Instances, if it were seasonable in this place; but I would only observe, that as the Primitive Christians made use of this Analogy of Faith, as a Standard to try all new Opinions by, so this Rule, if it were now pursued, might put an end to many Controversies.

Another Proof that the Scriptures neither are, nor could be corrupted, may be taken from the frequent repetition of the same Doctrine. If any Doctrine of Christianity were receiv'd by the single Testimony of one Passage, any Alteration might have been more easily made, but there is no Truth, that I know of, which is not prov'd by great numbers of Texts. Whosoever therefore, in favour of any Opinion of his own, would have chang'd the Scriptures, had a difficult work on his hands,

hands, and must not pervert one Passage only, but many. Thus for instance, the orthodox Christians cannot fairly be accus'd of designedly inserting the disputed Passage of St. *John*, *there be three that bear witness in Heaven*, because the Doctrine of the Trinity being founded upon many other Passages, they must be equally suppos'd to have forg'd them all. And this I take to be the reason why a particular Providence did not so watch over the Scriptures, that there should not be one various reading in them, which would have been absolutely necessary, if the certainty of any one Doctrine had depended upon any single Text; since howsoever any one Passage may be perverted, yet from the general Tenour of others, the Design of the inspired Writers may easily be gather'd.

The last Argument that I would offer for the Purity of the sacred Text, is the Malice and Watchfulness of Hereticks in all times. These were the most likely to corrupt the Scriptures themselves, and would be the forwardest to charge that Fault upon others. There have been in all Ages Enemies to our Faith, of as much Malice and Knowledge as *Nazarenus*, who would have been very loud in their Complaints on this head, if there had been any reason. ^a *Celsus* personating a *Jew*,
G objected

^a Μεταχαράξαντες ὃ τὸ εὐαγγέλιον ἄλλως ἢ οὐδὲ ἢ τὰς διὰ Μαρκίανος καὶ τὰς διὰ Οὐαλεντίνου, οἶμαι ὃ καὶ τὰς διὰ Λουκιανῶ.

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objected to the Christians the Corruption of their Copies, but was directly answered by *Origen*, with a flat denial to the Charge: And he observes, that the thing had been attempted by none but the *Marcionites* and *Valentinians*: and that this therefore was no more an Objection against true Christianity, than Epicurism was to true Philosophy. The weak Objections which have been made against our holy Faith upon this Head, are to its Advantage; and it is most certain, that if greater Diligence be us'd in searching for other ancient Copies, they will abundantly set forth the Purity of the Scriptures, and expose the violence of their and our Enemies. Those sacred Writings, in spite of the Searches or Scoffings of Unbelievers, will still continue to be the Records of Truth, and the Evidences and Pledges of our Salvation, and speak as plainly and intelligibly the Will of God, as they did at their first delivery. I would observe to *Nazarenus* and his Friends, that they prove by these Attempts, better Friends to the Scriptures than they design, and that by bringing so weak Objections, they strengthen that Cause they would destroy.

Τὸτο δὲ τὸ λεγόμενον ὅτι τὰ λόγια εἰς ἐγκλημα, ἀλλὰ τὰ πολυπληθῆ
ἐκδιωγῆσαι τὰ βιβλία. Καὶ ὡς περὶ τὴν φιλοσοφίαν ἐγκλημα εἶ-
σιν οἱ σοφισταί, ἢ οἱ ἐπικύριοι—— ὅτως καὶ τὰ ἀληθινὰ χριστι-
ανισμῶ ἐγκλημα οἱ μεταχαράττοντες τὰ βιβλία. Orig. contra
Cels. lib. 2. Vide Aug. contra Faust. lib. 33.



CHAP. VII.

Of Mahometan Christianity.

NAZARENUS fancies that he hath given a clearer Account than is commonly to be met, of the Mahometan Sentiments in relation to Jesus and the Gospel, and that it is not without ground, that he hath represented them as a sort of Christians, and not the worst sort neither, whereupon he makes some distant Overtures for their Toleration. He is not singular in this Point, for the late Professor *Reland* hath given a favourable, and in some respects a false Account of them, and makes them to be bely'd and misrepresented by the Christian Writers, in respect of the Absurdities and Fables of the *Alcoran*. There have been likewise some amongst our selves, that out of Ignorance, or ill Will to their own Religion, have profess'd to think better of them than they deserve. A Physician of some note, a few Years ago wrote, as it is said, a thorough Defence of their Sentiments, a Manuscript Copy of which I have seen, and it is surprising, that among the many unbelieving Books that have been lately publish'd, this should escape. I think it therefore not unseasonable to set forth in short the *Maho-*

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metan Sentiments in relation to the Christian Religion, that the World may see what sort of Christianity is approv'd by *Nazarenius*.

Mahometism is properly compos'd of two Parts, the one of which is a mixture of Antichristian Opinions, the other is the remains of old *Arabian* Superstitions. As to the former, it is certain that there is nothing laid down by *Mahomet* in Conformity with the Christian Sentiments, but in direct opposition to them. And therefore he doth not tell what is, but what is not to be believ'd of *Jesus*. *Arabia* had for some time swarm'd with Hereticks of many Denominations, which however different in other Sentiments, generally agreed to oppose the Divinity of the Son of God. These certainly adher'd in great Numbers to the Impostor: for when Men have once left the strait Paths of Truth, they know not where they shall stop, and sometimes go farther than they themselves design. *Mahomet*, in complement to these, and hoping to gain others of the same Persuasion, doth for that reason, with as much Impertinence as Blasphemy, repeat in every Page, that *Jesus* is a *Servant like other Servants*, that *he did no Miracles by his own Power*, that *God hath no Son*, &c.

* Horring. Hist. Orient. lib. ii. c. 2.

* Alc. Chap. iii. *Warneri* Compendium, p. 8.

As the Opposition of these Hereticks made them very insensible of the Merit and Necessity of his Satisfaction, so this encourag'd the Impostor to deny the Reality of his Death and Resurrection. The Intercession of our blessed Lord at God's right hand, is conformably with the rest transform'd in a most monstrous manner; for though they allow him to intercede upon some occasions, yet he hath no more right in this, than what all other Believers, Men as well as Women, have in the like case, to whom they impute as much Success as to him. But the most monstrous Opinion of the *Mahometans*, is, that our blessed Lord will once more descend upon Earth, and descend in that inferior Character, as to pray to, and be govern'd by *Mahomet*; tho' in this respect it is to be confess'd, that the Impostor hath been, in this blasphemous Assertion, far outdone by his Followers. However, both he and they agree in this, that the Christians who believe in the blessed Trinity are finally to be damn'd, and that their unpardonable Crime is, the cal-

* *Christumne ergo intercedere pro piis credunt Muslimi? credunt verò, — sed & credentibus hoc tribuitur. Warner. ib. p. 21.*

u *Ubi verò descendet (Jesus) ita descendet ut actiones suas componat ex instituto Muhammedis, & preces fundat ad eum conversus, perinde ac si quispiam ex sectatoribus ejus esset. Idem ex Commentar. Alc. p. 34.*

w *Alc. chap. 9. 18. Warner. p. 38. Anonymi confutatio Muhammed. Edit. per le Moyne, p. 448.*

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ling *Jesus Christ* the Son of God. At first sight one would think that *Mahomet*, according to the Fate of most Lyars had contradicted himself in thus condemning the Christians; for in the fifth Chapter of the *Alcoran* he gives them a good Character; but it is evident that he there means those Christian Hereticks, who oppos'd the Belief of our Saviour's Divinity; but whosoever did espouse it, he calls them Associators and Infidels, and dooms them to future Punishment. The Religion therefore of *Mahomet*, so far as it concerns his Sentiments of our Lord, is nothing but *Arianism* or *Nestorianism*, and consists in opposing that fundamental Article of our Faith, which distinguisheth it from all others.

The other part of *Mahometism*, namely their Circumcision, their Abstinence from Wine, Blood and Swines Flesh, and their Pilgrimage to *Mecca*, was the popular Religion of the *Corashite* Tribe, which the Impostor thought fit to retain. It is particularly a great Mistake to attribute their Use of Circumcision to the *Jews*, for the * *Arabians* undoubtedly retain'd it by Tradition from

* Τῶν δὲ ἐν Ἰουδαίᾳ τοῖς καὶ Ἀραβίαις τοιοῦτ' ὡς πάντας
 δεξιμνεῖς τετρακαίδεκα τοῖς ὡς ἰστέον) πρὸς αὐτῶν. Orig. Phil.
 loc. cap. 23. Multarum ex quaque parte gentium & maxime
 quæ Judææ Palæstinæque confines sunt, usque hodiè populi
 circumciduntur — & omnis regio Saracenorum quæ
 habitat in solitudine. Hieronym. Comm. in Jeremiam. vide
 Pocockii specimen Hist. Arabia, Reland. relig. Muhammed. l. i.
 p. 121.

Ishmael,

Ishmael. The ^y *Arabians* likewise had a great Abhorrence of Blood, from whom undoubtedly the *Alcoran* borrow'd it, and not as *Nazarenius* imagines from the first Christians. ^z The learned *Hottinger* hath in many Particulars shew'd the Conformity between the *Mahometan* Rites, and those of the old *Sabeans*, and the same Matter hath been likewise prosecuted by *Warner*; a Manuscript of which was laid up in the Library at *Leiden*, but hath since been stole from thence. ^a *Reland* informs us, that if this Book were extant we should find that many things which are attributed to *Mahomet* as the Author, were in use long before his time; and mentions particularly the Worship of one God without Idolatry, Circumcision, Frequency of Prayers, the religious Journies to *Mecca*, and the Abstinence from Wine.

I would observe from hence, that we generally attribute greater Success to *Mahomet* than he really had; for he doth not seem so much to have establish'd a new Religion, as to have settled and put in Order an old one. He comply'd with the popular Notions of his Countrey-men, and afterwards by the Assist-

^y Hotting. Hist. Orient. lib. i. c. 8. ^z Hist. Orient. ib.

^a Si *Levini Warneri* Commentarius Manuscriptus de moribus Arabum ante Mohammedem, qui olim in Bibliotheca *Lugduno-Batava* fuit, extaret; deprehenderemus multa quæ Mohammedi ut auctori tribuuntur, jamdiu ante Mohammedem in usu fuisse. *Reland*. lib. 2.

ance of their Arms propagated these Notions into the adjacent Parts. How different, as in all other Respects, so more especially in this, was the Success of the Christian Religion, that comply'd not with the popular Superstitions, the philosophical Notions, or the corrupt Practices of the Age, but directly oppos'd them! Whereas *Mahometism* comply'd with all these; and is so far from shewing the great Artifice of the Impostor, that a great part of it was in vogue long before his time; this Matter deserves to be consider'd by those, who with as little Judgment as Piety compare the Success of *Mahomet's* popular flattering Errors, which he rather digested than invented, with the severe and self-denying Truths of our blessed Lord. It is farther to be observ'd, that as the Christian Hereticks by falling away from the Belief of the Son of God, sunk from one step to another, 'till they became the Followers of that vile Impostor; so we should at this Day consider how necessary this Article, now so much oppos'd, is to the Life and Being of the Christian Religion, and that for want of early opposing the Growth of *Arian* or *Socinian* Notions, God may deservedly remove his Candlestick out of this Nation, and give us up, as he did the half Christians of the seventh Century, to some such Delusion.

But I must not so far forget my Subject, as to omit observing what sort of Christians are
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in *Nazareus's* Esteem, who notwithstanding have nothing of Christian in their Religion but the Opposition to it, and who take no notice of the great Author and Finisher of our Faith, but by a negative Creed and reviling Blasphemies. However his Expression of *Mahometan* Christianity is the only Passage of his Book which I do not condemn, provided he would mean by it, not the *Mussulman's* on the other side the Water, but the *Socinians* here. These may truly and properly be term'd *Mahometan* Christians, having reviv'd the Notions and repeated the Blasphemies of the worst Hereticks of Antiquity. They agree in many Particulars with these miserable Sects of *Nestorians*, who fell in with the Impostor *Mahomet*; and where-ever they have settled, as it is Matter of Fact in *Poland*, they have ruin'd the whole Face of Religion. I cannot understand the great Difference between our *Unitarians* and *Mahometans*, bating some popular Superstitions, nor do I for that Reason allow the latter to be Christians, but deny both to be so.

The ^b greatest Protestants have been for-

^b Dogmata ipsorum planissime eadem sunt cum dogmatibus Turcarum. — Nihil docent Sociniani quin hoc itidem doceant Mahometani, & aliquando tolerabilius. *Maccov. Theol. Pol. cap. 17.* Metuo ne hæc doctrina Mahometismo aditum avertat, & exitium portendat florentissimis rebus publicis quæ hos errores ferunt. *Jos. Simlerus.* Vide *Hornbeck, Summ. Controversiarum. l. 7.* N. B. *The Racovian Catechism* was burnt by Order of Parliament, in the Year 1658, about five Months before Cromwell's Death.

H

merly

merly very watchful against the Growth of the *Unitarian* Notions, and have in their Discourses call'd them *Mahometans*.^c *Hottinger* hath in the last Edition of his *Oriental History* wrote a Dissertation to prove the Conformity of their Sentiments, which he hath made out in many Particulars. There have not been wanting Proposals of Accommodation on the *Socinian* side, if the^d Letter presented by some of them to the *Morocco* Ambassador in the Year 1684, be genuine, as it is generally believ'd; there they call themselves *Fellow-Champions for the Truth*; they acknowledg'd that *God had rais'd Mahomet to defend the Faith with the Sword*, and promise their Assistance in offering *Materials to repair the Platform of their Religion*. To return therefore to *Mahometan* Christianity, the Expression hath more Propriety in it than would appear at first View, and without Breach of Truth and Charity, may be bestow'd upon those who flatly deny the divine Character of the Son of God. These *Soci-nians* under the Disguise of Protestants are not Christians, and out of a pretended Zeal against Popery, to which they are the best Friends, revile all Decency in the Church, and Faith in Religion. I do allow that Mr.

^c Lib. 2. C. 3. Edit. Tigur. 1660.

^d Vide Lesley's *Socinian Controversy*, printed at London, 1708.

Toland is not concern'd in the Party of the Socinians, whom he fairly disclaims, but I could not omit this fair Opportunity of giving a seasonable Caution against them.



C H A P. VIII.

Of the Nazaræans or Ebionites.

IT is not very easy to account for the Connexion of my Subject, and it appears somewhat incongruous to pass at once from *Mahometan* Christianity to the *Nazaræans* and *Ebionites*. But I follow the disorderly and irregular Steps of an Adversary, whose best Defence seems to be his want of Logick and Method, and whose Arguments, as weak as they are, would appear much weaker if their Meaning and Connexion were more apparent.

However, let us try to make out the Connexion of two so very different Subjects; the Gospel of *Barnabas* abuses *Paul* for being a Deceiver, and therefore to shew the Antiquity and Orthodoxy of the *Turkish* Evangelist in this Point, he brings out the *Nazaræans*, as joining in the same Clamours.

These *Nazaræans* or *Ebionites*, for they were the same Sect under different Names,

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were, according to him, the first and only Christians, and probably no worse Christians, in his Account, for reviling St. *Paul*, and rejecting his Epistles as those of an Enemy and an Impostor. They were not only injurious to the Apostle of the Gentiles, but to our blessed Lord himself, whose miraculous Birth by the Virgin was deny'd by some of them, and his Divinity by all. The Courage or Skill of *Nazarenus* fail'd him here, for he should either have boldly defended his Friends the *Ebionites* in this Point, or have shew'd how that Doctrine, which was follow'd by the first and only Christians, became the single Test of Christianity afterwards. He hath ransack'd as much Antiquity as he could meet with, to prove that these Hereticks were nick-nam'd and misrepresented, and that *they* only understood the original Plan of Christianity; the want of Proofs on this Head he hath supply'd with ill Language, and the Fathers who were not on his Side, as indeed there are very few, are run down by Raillery.

It will not however be a difficult, or an useless Task, to set the History of these old Hereticks in a clearer light. The Body of the Christians were never call'd *Nazarenes*, but by their profess'd Enemies; so that these

* Tert. de præscript. cap. 33. Iren. lib. i. c. 26. Euf. Eccl. Hist. l. 3. c. 27. Theodoret. Hær. Fab. l. 2. Philastrius de Hæres. Epiph. Hær. 30. Mercator in Nestorium. Prædestinat. l. i. c. 10.

Sectaries have not that Authority from the prescription of their Name, as hath been thought. I have prov'd before, that there is a manifest distinction both in the Etymology and Orthography, between that Name by which the *Jews* and *Mahometans* have call'd the Christians, and that by which these Hereticks have styl'd themselves. It is a great, though a common Mistake, that *Nazarene* was with their own Choice and Approbation the general Name of all the Believers, and that they who were for the *Jewish* Rites retain'd the Name, while the others dropp'd it. It is worthy of Observation, that the Disciples were call'd Christians at *Antioch*, whilst the Gospel was preach'd to *Jews* only; and it is therefore hard to account why the *Jewish* Converts should call themselves *Nazareans*, and change a sacred Name, given, as it seems, by divine Appointment, for a worse Denomination of their own. This is an undoubted Argument with me, that the Name of the Sect did not arise from the general Appellation of the Body of Believers, but from their undue Separation from it.

The Behaviour of the *Nazareans* agrees well with their Puritanick Name. ⁸ They made it a religious Rite to wash every Day before Dinner, they would not suffer one of

^f Vide Act. xi. 26. & sensum vocis *Xenotismos*.

⁸ Epiphan. Hær. 30.

another

another Religion to touch them, they abstain'd from all Food that proceeded from living Creatures; which Superstitions they pretended to have learn'd from *Peter*; and conformably to this Abstinence, they paid a great respect to Virginity, though they fell so grossly from this in some time, as to force all to marry even against their Will. If they had been in being when *St. Paul* wrote his Epistle to the *Colossians*, one would think he referr'd to them, Chap. ii. v. 21. *Touch not, taste not, handle not, &c.* As also in his first Epistle to *Timothy*, Chap. iv. v. 3. *Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats which God had created to be receiv'd with giving of Thanks*; but it is more probable that he prophetically describ'd them, which indeed appears from the first Verse.

But *Nazarenus* is guilty of a manifest Falshood, when he affirms that they interpreted Christianity, as he doth; for they did not confine the Necessity of the Law to *Jewish* Converts, but extended it to *Gentile* Christians; nor one Author that mentions them says, that they grounded their Doctrine upon the distinction of *Jew* and *Gentile*, but they on the contrary give the reason of it from the insufficiency of the Gospel Covenant, without these legal Observances. He is so far from having any one Ancient on his side in this matter, that even *St. Austin*, whom for want of understanding him better, he affirms

to favour the *Nazareans*, ^h says the quite contrary, that these would have the *Gentiles* circumcis'd.

They retain'd not this Name of *Nazareans* long, but one *Ebion*, a Disciple of *Cerintus*, having join'd himself to them, they were thenceforward more generally call'd *Ebionites*. They were in some time better known by this latter Name; and this is the true Reason why *Irenæus* and *Eusebius* do not mention the *Nazareans*, not that they accounted them orthodox, as *Nazarenus* insinuates, but because they sufficiently condemn'd them under the Name of *Ebionites*. Nor were they omitted by these Writers in the Catalogues of Writers for any other reason, but because they were accounted the same Sect under two denominations. *Nazarenus* was sensible that it would not be for the Honour of his Sect to be call'd so from any single Person, since that alone is a mark of some ⁱ Defection from the Truth; and therefore he represents them so call'd from the Poverty of their Circumstances or Disposi-

^h Hoc temperamentum cum displicuisset quibusdam ex circumcisione credentibus, qui hæc non intelligebant, in eâ perversitate manserunt, ut & gentes cogerent judaizare. Ii sunt quos Faustus Symmachianorum vel Nazarenorum nomine commemoravit, *adv. Faustum lib. 18.*

ⁱ Καὶ εἰς τὴν ὑποψίαν ἡμῶν διὰ τὴν ἀποστασίαν τῶν ἀνδρῶν, ἐξ ἧς ἡμεῖς ἐκείνην διδασκὴν καὶ νόμον ἤγαγον. *Just. Martyr. Dial. cum Tryph.* Christiani esse desierunt, qui Christi nomine amisso humana & externa vocabula induerunt, *Lact. lib. 4.*

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tions, and denies that there was ever any such Person as *Ebion* in being; but on the contrary, I do not know any fact of Antiquity better prov'd, than that there was once such a Person, and that he gave name to this Sect. ^k*Ignatius*, *Justin Martyr*, and other Fathers, are said by *St. Jerom* to have wrote against him; *Tertullian* expressly mentions him as the Disciple and Successor of the Heretick *Cerinthus*; *Philastrius* and *Pacianus* agree in the same Sentiment, and *Mercator* farther informs us, that he was originally a Stoick Philosopher. All which Testimonies, with many more, *Nazarenus* either wanted the skill to discover, or the Faithfulness to produce. *Origen* and *Eusebius* do indeed, in accounting for this Name, allude to the *Hebrew* Word for Poverty, but they do not deny *Ebion* to be the Founder of the Sect. But besides, the allusion it self is not just, being borrow'd from a Language that was not then us'd, and not from the *Syriack*, which

^k Numquid non possum tibi totam veterum Scriptorum seriem commovere, *Ignatium*, *Polycarpum*, *Ireneum*, *Justinum Martyrem* — qui adversus *Ebionem* & *Theodotum Byzantium* plena sapientiæ volumina conscripserunt. *Hieronym.* adv. *Helvid.* Hujus successor *Ebion* fuit, *Cerintho* non in omni parte consentiens. *Tertul.* de præscript. sicuti vocatur & adinventor ipsius erroris *Ebion.* vet. interpres. *Ignatii* ad *Philad.* quid posterioribus temporibus *Ebion* & *Apelles* & *Marcion.* *Pacianus* Epist. ad *Symp.* *Hebion* discipulus *Cerinth* & *Philastrius.* Quod totum impietatis malum *Pauli* (*Samo-sateni*) ab *Ebione* magis Stoico Philosopho tractum est. *Mar. Mercator* in *Nestorium.*

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was the Mother Tongue. I must tell *Nazarenus*, that מָנָא with which he hath adorn'd his Margin, is not in the *Syriack* Copy, nor in the *Hebrew* Text of *Munster*, nor doth it ever signify Evangelical Poverty: He had better spend his critical Conjectures upon *Irish*, where he may hope few will examine him, than upon Oriental Learning, where he may be so easily detected.

The ¹ *Ebionites* were of two sorts; they both agreed in asserting the Necessity of the *Jewish* Law, and in believing the Son of God to be a mere Man; but they differ'd in their Opinion of his Birth, part of them allowing his miraculous Birth by the Virgin *Mary*, and part denying it. This Division might be consistent enough with their Rise from *Ebion*; for though their Master might assert *Jesus Christ* to be a mere Man, yet he had left the matter of his Birth undetermin'd, which occasion'd a Division among his Followers. The Fathers therefore do not act with that inexcusable Confusion and Injustice in this matter, as *Nazarenus* insinuates; since it is possible, and by known experience very certain, that the Members of a Sect have agreed in some Notions, and disagreed in others, where their Head hath chanc'd to be silent.

¹ Orig. lib. 5. contra Celsum. Euf. l. iii. c. 27. Niceph. Eccl. Hist. l. iii. c. 13.

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It is no wonder that these *Nazaræans* or *Ebionites* differ'd so much in the main Doctrine of their Faith, when they disown'd the Scriptures that should be the Rule of it; and indeed they were so far from being the first, and only Christians, that they did not receive the Books wrote by the Apostles. They not only rejected the Epistles of St. *Paul*, whom for his opposition to the *Jewish* Law they particularly dislik'd, but likewise all the rest of the Canonical Books: They pretended, in order to gain better Terms from the other Believers, to use a *Hebrew* Gospel of St. *Matthew*, which by the way probably caus'd the erroneous Opinion of that Gospel being originally wrote in *Hebrew*; but this was a false Pretence, for the Gospel according to the *Hebrews*, which they follow'd, was very different from ours of St. *Matthew*, as appears not only from the remaining Fragments of it, but from the Testimony of *Jerom*, who affirms that he translated it both into *Greek* and *Latin*. Some, from a mistaken Passage of *Eusebius*, have affirm'd that *Symmachus*, a considerable Member of this Sect, from whom these *Ebionites* were by some call'd *Symmachians* afterwards, commented upon the Gospel of St. *Matthew*, whereas^m the *Greek* word,

^m Ὑπομνήματα ἢ Συμμάχια εἰσὶν νῦν φέρεται, ἐν οἷς δοκεῖ πρὸς τὸ κτ' Ματθαῖον ἀπ' αὐτοῦ δακτύλου τὸ δεδηλωμένον αἰρεσὶν περιγυῖν. Euf. Eccl. Hist. l. vi. c. 17. Where Valesius observes, that the word ἀπ' αὐτοῦ doth not signify to comment upon, but to oppose.

when

when rightly render'd, signifies that he wrote against it. It is natural to observe from hence, how probably these Hereticks, as *Nazarenus* pretends, should understand the design of Christianity better than the other Christians, when they submitted not to the receiv'd Writings of the Apostles, but follow'd a chimerical and forg'd Gospel of their own, and were particularly wrote against by ⁿ St. *John* the last surviving Apostle.

But there is one particular more to be observ'd in these *Ebionites*, and that is the time of their first Appearance. These Hereticks, whom *Nazarenus* calls the first Christians, were not known to the Ancients, till after the Destruction of *Jerusalem*. *Epiphanius* refers them to that time, but *Eusebius* in his *Chronicon* brings them as low as *Trajan*, and is herein followed by the *Alexandrian* Chronicle. *Theodoret* makes them contemporary with *Domitian*, which is probably nearest the Truth. It appears from the Testimony of ^o *Hegesippus*, that the Church continu'd for some time a chaste unspotted Virgin, and was not much troubled with Hereticks during the Lifetime of the Apostles. So that though they began in the latter part of the first Century, yet they were not in any great number till the second. St. *John*, who liv'd till that

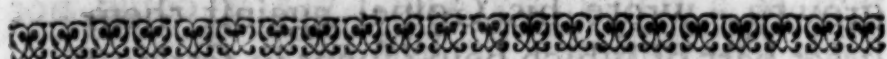
ⁿ Hieronym. de Script. Mercator in Nestorium. Victorinus Tom. i. Biblioth. Lat.

^o Eus. Eccl. Hist. l. iii. c. 32.

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time, and was himself a Witness of their growth, wrote his Gospel against them; a great part of which being spent in setting forth the Divine Nature of our blessed Lord, was manifestly levell'd against the *Ebionite* Opinions.

Nazarenus hath not represented one particular truly, or clearly, relating to these Hereticks, except their Calumnies against St. *Paul*, which he seems glad to revive, and for which he undoubtedly lik'd them the better. The Difference between him and my self upon this Head is as wide as possible; he saith that they were nicknam'd from their Poverty of some kind; I on the contrary have prov'd, from a Cloud of Testimonies, that they were so call'd from *Ebion*, a wicked Heretick; he saith, that they press'd not the necessity of the *Jewish* Law upon *Gentile* Converts; I affirm, that they did, and for that, and the denial of our Lord's Divinity, were declar'd Hereticks. He saith, that they were the first and only Christians; when it is evident from the most approv'd Chronology of the Ancients, that they were not known till about the conclusion of the first Century. What accuracy in other things may be expected from such a Writer, when his Ignorance or Ill-Will leads him to mistake the Name, the Sentiments, and Chronology of that Sect which he defends.



CHAP. IX.

The gradual Repeal of the Jewish Law.

THE Character of these foremention'd Hereticks, and the Wilfulness or Ignorance of their Patron *Nazarenus*, will be made out most clearly, by setting forth those several Steps by which the *Jewish* Law was abolish'd. Most certainly it was not formally repeal'd at once, but continu'd to be observ'd, even after that it ceas'd to be obligatory. The Conformity of our Lord to the whole Law, and the Compliance of the Apostles for some Years after, seems to furnish an Argument in Favour of those Hereticks who prest the Observance of it.

The Behaviour of the Apostles, tho' it agreed in the external Practice with that of the *Ebionites*, yet was very different in its Principle; the former complying out of a compassionate Condescension to others, the latter out of a mistaken Sense of its Necessity; the one made it a Matter of indifferent Ceremony, the other a Term of Salvation. This Difference therefore doth effectually set aside all the Assertions of *Nazarenus* upon this Head.

Tho'

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Tho' the *Jewish* Law was in its first Design of a temporary Use, yet it could not with Convenience be laid aside all at once. Divine Providence had so appointed, that as it had grown by many Steps to that great Height of Ceremonies, so it should fall from it as gradually. The Prophets did frequently inculcate the spiritual Meaning of the Law, and by drawing them off from the Strictness of the Letter, prepar'd them for its future Repeal. That they might be wean'd from these external Observances, God taught them by the later Prophets, especially *Jeremiah* and *Ezekiel*, that this sort of Obedience was not his ultimate Intention, that he had hitherto given them *Statutes that were not good*. He promis'd likewise to give them a *New Covenant*, which in the lowest Sense of the Expression must signify a great Change, if not the absolute Repeal of the old one. The Destruction likewise of the first Temple had the same Effect, and admonish'd all serious Men to look forward to that Restitution of all things promis'd in the *Messiah*. The former Temple, built by *Solomon*, had all the Marks and Pledges of God's Favour, in the Tables of the Covenant, the holy Ark, and above all, in that Appearance of Glory, and the divine Presence that hover'd upon the Holy of Holies. But as these great Advantages could not preserve that Temple, to which they belong'd, from Destruction, there must be less Hope

Hope of Continuance to the second which had none of them. The Law therefore was in a declining State under the latter Temple; from the want of these, and the Sense of this Want turn'd the Eyes of the better sort to a more spiritual Institution. Their religious Establishment receiv'd still a greater Blow from the disturb'd Succession of their High Priests, the regular Order of which being the Foundation of their legal Atonements, was much disturb'd under *Herod* and the *Roman* Government. There seem to be the same gradual Decays in that part of their Civil Constitution which had God for its Author, one great part of which was the Freedom of Servants at the seventh Year, and that of Lands at the fiftieth, but *P* grew into Disuse after the *Babylonish* Captivity.

But the actual Repeal of the *Jewish* Law was not made till the Coming of our Lord *Jesus*; who, tho' he conform'd himself to the Circumcision, the Feast of the Passover, the Laws of Leprosy, &c. and did by his own Example fulfil all Righteousness, yet in his Discourses he laid down those Positions, which did in a great Measure unsettle the legal Precepts. The Civilians observe two ways of repealing a Law, either the total abolishing it, or the adding something which virtually repeals it. Our Saviour took the latter Me-

P Maimonides. lib. sept. in Hal. Schemitta vejobel.

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thod in his Sermon upon the Mount, where after reciting the Mosaic Precepts, with an Authority becoming the Son of God, he adds his own, *but I say unto you*: and it is a common but great Mistake, to think that our Lord in the fifth of *St. Matthew* did only rescue the Law from the narrow and false Interpretations of the *Jewish* Doctors, for he actually enlarg'd the Precepts themselves to a much greater Extent than the Words of them would have bore; which by the way might shew sufficiently his Divine Character, who took upon him to change and improve those Rules which had been deliver'd before in God's Name.

As our Lord in that Discourse chang'd the Tenor and Extent of the Moral Law, so in many others, he shew'd the Ceremonial Law to be unnecessary. He laid down a Rule which virtually took away the Distinction of Meats, tho' out of Compassion to the Prejudices of his Hearers he did not apply it. He relax'd the Necessity of the Sabbath from its wonted Rigour, giving that as an Instance, as *St. Austin* observes, of their near approaching Liberty. He more especially shew'd his distant Intention of repealing the Law, not

¶ Propterea Dominus Jesus Christus libertatem daturus credentibus, quædam earum observationum non servavit ad literam; unde etiam cum Sabbato esurientes discipuli spicas evulssissent, respondit indignantibus Dominum esse filium hominis etiam Sabbati. *Aug. ad Galatas.*

only by changing the Terms of Marriage and Divorce, but by the Reason he gave for that Change: *Moses permitted this for the Hardness of your Hearts, but from the beginning it was not so*; shewing by this Reasoning that these Precepts were not perfect in their kind, and only of a temporary Use. But he confirm'd this Repeal of the Law by one express Declaration, telling his Disciples that the *Law and the Prophets were till John*; that is, that their Use and Obligation ceas'd at the first preaching of the Kingdom of Heaven, tho' for some Reasons the Observance of them might be tolerated somewhat longer.

Notwithstanding the Disciples did not fully understand this Doctrine of our Lord, nor were they as yet fit to have it farther explain'd. He told them himself that he had many things to say which they could not yet receive; which, as *Origen* judiciously observes, were the several Types and Shadows of the *Jewish Law* which was now to be abolish'd, and that Substance of good things which had been couch'd under them. Our great Law-giver, for two very evident Reasons repeal'd not the Law in a formal manner, as well to comply with the Prejudices

¹ Μὴ πρὸς ὡς Ἰουδαίοις καὶ συναγαγεῖται τὸ καὶ τὸ γράμμα Μωσίου νόμῳ τοῖς ἀποστόλοις, εἶχε μὲν λέγειν, τίς ὁ ἀληθὴς νόμος καὶ τινῶν ὑπερβάντων ὑποδείγματι καὶ σκιᾷ ἢ ὡς τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις λαλῆσα ἀπὸ τελευτῆς, &c. *Origen. contra Celsum, lib. 2.*

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of his Followers, who would have had a worse Opinion of his Gospel, if their old Religion was entirely to be laid aside; as also to prevent the ill Use which might have been made of it in leading Men, to think that the Old Testament was not worthy of God, and of no use to Christians; which Opinion, notwithstanding this Caution, was taken up by the *Marcionites*, and other Hereticks.

The Disciples were in all Probability enlighten'd in these Matters by the Descent of the Holy Spirit, but they follow'd the Conduct of their Master in setting aside the *Jewish* Precepts by Degrees. They were led by many seemingly accidental Occurrences, to declare against the legal Observances, and did not at once perfect the Christian Dispensation in this Matter. The Charge against *Stephen* is one great Proof, that the Apostles believed the Law to be chang'd, and only wanted a favourable Occasion to declare it; *this Man ceaseth not to speak blasphemous things against this holy Place and the Law, and that Jesus shall destroy this Place, and change the Customs that Moses taught*; where it is observable that they charge him not with saying that *Jesus* had already chang'd their Customs, but would do so; which seems to shew that the Apostles, expecting the sudden Destruction of the Temple, waited for that seasonable Opportunity of declaring against the *Jewish* Law.

However

However they were quickned by some Accidents to declare this much sooner. St. *Peter* the Apostle of the Circumcision was encourag'd by the Vision about *Cornelius*, to depart from the Rule which they had hitherto observ'd, of preaching only to *Jews*, and to receive the first *Gentile* into the Faith. The same Apostle, at the Council of *Jerusalem*, made the most forward Declaration against the Law, by calling it a Yoke which *neither they nor their Fathers were able to bear*: which shew'd that he did not only discharge the *Gentiles* but the *Jews* from observing it. The Question which gave occasion to that Council was not owing to the private Sentiment of any one Apostle, but to the Pride of some Pharisaical Christians; the Ancients suppose *Cerinthus* to have been the Promoter of it; but, be that as it will, it was very much for the Peace of the Church that this Question was determin'd while the Apostles were living and present at *Jerusalem*; undoubtedly this their Decree, which set aside the Obligation of the *Jewish* Law, had the greater Sanction from their Numbers and Unanimity.

The Opinion of the Apostles from that time was, that the *Jewish* Law in respect of the *Gentiles*, was sinful, and in respect of the *Jews* indifferent and superfluous, that

* Epiph. Hær. 28. Aug. adv. Faustin. l. 18.

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it was harmless if not follow'd out of Necessity; the contrary of which was the Opinion of *Nazarenus's* Friends, and which very much degrading the Efficacy of *Christ's* Satisfaction, was deservedly accounted heretical and dangerous. For it is observable that the reason of *St. Paul's* compliance with it afterwards, was not out of any sense of its necessity, but to shew that he accounted it not sinful; that though there was no obligation to circumcise their Children, yet there was as yet no Sin in doing it. * When he came to *Jerusalem*, he was charg'd with teaching the Sinfulness of the *Jewish* Customs (for that is manifestly the meaning of the Words); to shew therefore that this Charge was not true, he consented at their request to perform a Vow. I take *St. Paul's* Conduct to be the best illustration of the Discipline of that time, in respect of the Law, who became a *Jew to gain the Jews*: He circumcis'd *Timothy* in compliance with their Prejudices, and he ^u refused to do the same with *Titus*, when Circumcision was urg'd by false Brethren as necessary. He was willing to subject himself and believing *Jews*, to the keep-

* Non obscurum est & Jacobum hoc ideo monuisse, ut scirent falsa esse quæ de illo audierant; ne per doctrinam Christi velut sacrilega nec Deo mandante conscripta damnari putarentur quæ per Moysen patribus fuerant ministrata. *Aug. Ep. 19.*

^u Vide *Aug. ibid.*

ing of a harmless Ceremony, when it might be made the instrument of Conversion to others; and he refus'd that very Ceremony, when it seem'd to affect the Christian Liberty, or depreciate the Efficacy of the Redemption.

St. *Peter's* Conduct is much easier to clear up than to defend; he, by an Error incident to human Frailty, withdrew himself from the Conversation of the *Gentiles* upon the coming of the *Jews* thither. There seems no occasion for the Evasion that St. *Jerom* found out in this matter; for, to excuse the Apostle, he supposes an artificial Dissimulation between him and *Paul*. One may say with Truth, and without any Prejudice to his Writings, that *Peter* was guilty of Dissimulation, but this is no more an Objection to his Apostleship, than the denial of his Master; and indeed it was a Misconduct in his Behaviour, not an Error in his Preaching. The great Enemy of our Religion, *Porphry*, made use of this Reprehension from *Paul* to *Peter*, as an argument of their Emulation: but quite the contrary, the Behaviour of both was truly glorious, the honest plainness of one Apostle, and the modest Condescension of the other, are great Examples, and worthy of Imitation. ^y Though *Peter* sufficiently made

^y Erat objurgatore suo ipse qui objurgabatur mirabilior & ad imitandum difficilior; facilius est enim videre quid in a-

amends for his Fault, by hearing it patiently told; it being, as many Ancients have observ'd upon this occasion, more glorious to hear a Reproof than to give it.

The Quarrel between *Jerom* and *Austin* upon this Subject, is foully represented by *Nazarenus*; for tho' *Jerom* was mistaken in calling it an officious Lye, yet if his reading had been equal to his Malice, he might have known that the good Father retracted his Opinion afterwards, and own'd *St. Peter*² to be mistaken. But his Representation of *Austin's* Opinion upon this Head, is a most gross Falshood; for he, instead of making an effort in favour of the *Nazareans*³, expressly disclaims them: He affirms, that the observance of the Law, with the Opinion of its Necessity, even by *Jewish* Christians, is^b sinful; and observes, that the Apostles comply'd with it as an innocent Ceremony, which I

lio corrigas, atque id vituperando vel objurgando corrigere, quàm videre quid in te corrigendum sit, libenterque corrigi. *Aug. ad Galatas.*

² Hieron. lib. i. adv. Pel.

³ Quod putavérunt Hæretici (*Ebionai*) quid dum volunt & Judæi esse & Christiani, nec Judæi nec Christiani esse poterunt, quorum sententiam mihi cavendam, *quamvis in eâ nunquam fuerim*, tamen benevolentissimè admonere dignatus es. *Aug. Ep. 19.*

^b Proinde sicut tu è contrario loqueris & liberâ voce pronuntias cæremonias Judæorum & perniciosas esse & mortiferas Christianis——ita ego hanc vocem tuam omnino confirmo, & addo, quicumque eas observaverit, sive ex *Judeis*, sive ex Gentibus, non solum veraciter verum etiam simulatè, eum in Barathrum Diaboli devolutum. *Aug. ib.*

take

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take to be the true state of the Case, and that those Hereticks observ'd it as a Condition of Salvation. The Law was at that time dead, though not buried, and it was fitting, as that forementioned Father observes, to inter with some decency those Sacraments of the ancient Fathers.

The last Stroke that was given to the observance of the *Jewish* Law, was the Destruction of *Jerusalem*, or to speak more accurately, the Expulsion of the *Jews* from thence by *Adrian*, which incident, as *Sulpitius Severus* informs us, was serviceable to the Church of God, as by the interposition of Providence it perfectly remov'd the Slavery of the Law by the Liberty of the Gospel.

From that time there were no more Bishops of the Circumcision, and all distinction of *Jew* and *Gentile* was intirely taken away; those that afterwards added the observance of the Law to the Belief of the Gospel, were from that time deservedly reckon'd Hereticks, which was the Case of that Sect for which *Nazarenes* pleads. Their Opinion was, that the *Jewish* Ceremonies were necessary to compleat the Grace of God, which was very con-

^c Militum cohortem custodias in perpetuum agitare jussit, quæ judæos omnes Hierosolymæ aditu arceret: quod quidem Christianæ fidei proficiebat, quia tum pene omnes Christum Deum sub legis observatione credebant. Nimirum id Domino ordinante dispositum ut legis servitus à libertate fidei atque Ecclesiæ tolleretur. *Hist. Sac.* l. ii.

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tradictory to the belief of Redemption by our Saviour, and very different from the Opinion of *Justin Martyr*^d, whom *Nazarenus* cites upon this occasion, who allows, that the *Jews* believing in Christ might be saved, tho' they observ'd the Precepts of *Moses*, provided they did not persuade others to the same; where two things are to be observ'd, the one, that this was not the case of the *Nazareans*, who asserted the general necessity of the Law, and therefore requir'd it of *Gentile* Converts; the other that I would observe is, that ^e *Justin* owns himself to be singular in his Opinion of these Men being sav'd.

The summ of the whole matter is this, the Reason and Obligation of the *Jewish* Precepts expir'd in the Death of Christ, but the usage and practice of them did not so, till the final Destruction of *Jerusalem*; and the Apostles comply'd with them as harmless Ceremonies during that Interval, that neither the *Jews* might be too much prejudic'd against the Gospel, nor the *Gentile* Converts have an ill Opinion of the Old Testament, which was the Foundation of the New. Thus the Establishment of Christianity; after many steps, receiv'd its utmost Perfection at the Destruction of the holy City; and that Act of God's Vengeance which was executed upon the

^d Dialog. cum Tryph. p. 255.

^e Id. ib.

Jews in the Destruction of their Temple Service, was merciful to the Christians, in perfecting and uniting the Church.

CHAP. X.

Of the original Plan of Christianity.

THE Discipline of the first Believers, which I have set forth in the foregoing Chapter, is a true Comment upon the Christian Doctrine concerning the *Jewish* Ceremonies, and therefore effectually exposes the Heresy of the *Nazareans*, and the weakness of their Advocate. It is to be confess'd (and there is no danger in confessing it) that the usage of the Law was continu'd by the Apostles longer than its Obligation; and that, not out of any sense of benefit to themselves, but out of Compassion and Condescension to the *Jews*. The Practice of it was as yet indifferent, but the Opinion of its necessity, was that which made the *Nazareans* Hereticks, being derogatory to the Perfection of Christ's Satisfaction. And that this was the true State of the Case, appears from this single Consideration, that these Friends and Clients of *Nazarene* were condemn'd by the Church, even before the *Jewish* Ceremonies in it were wholly laid aside. The Words of St. *Austin* express their Sentiments,

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ments, and the grounds of their Practice ; and I the rather chuse to produce him once more, because ^f *Nazarenus*, with as much Modesty as Truth, saith, that this Father maintain'd the very same Notion that he doth, that *the Christian Jews should ever observe their own Laws*: For he tells us, that they were to be remov'd silently, and in proportion to the growth of the Gospel, that the whole performance of those shadows might be spent in those *Jews* who were call'd to the Faith in the Apostolical times, and that the due mean was neither to detest them as idolatrous, nor to observe them as necessary ^g.

What I have hitherto said upon the History of the *Nazareans* or *Ebionites*, and upon the Sentiments and Practice of the Apostles and Apostolical Men, is sufficient to set aside this original Plan of Christianity ; but this matter will be made more abundantly clear from the Writings of *St. Paul*. Though the Abolition of the *Jewish* Law may be prov'd from others of the sacred Penmen, yet it is treated more at large by this ; the great Apostle of the *Gentiles* having signaliz'd himself by his Violence against the Church of Christ, did as much distinguish his Zeal for it afterwards, and shew'd an honest Mind, and the Power of God's Grace, in becoming as eminent a

^f P. 42.

^g Aug. Ep. 19.

Preacher, as he had been a Persecutor. It was by a particular Providence that he wrote so much; for having been an Enemy of *Jesus Christ*, the Testimony which he gave was more authentick, and less suspected than that of others, who had been always his Followers; his Zeal and Sincerity were rewarded with higher Revelations of the Mystery of Godliness, and as he labour'd more abundantly, so likewise more successfully than they all: The rest of the Apostles were, beyond all doubt, acquainted with the Repeal of the old Law, but whether from the singularity of his Talents, or his Station as Apostle of the *Gentiles*, the business of preaching it was committed wholly to him. For this reason, as his Writings explain the Doctrines of Christianity more clearly than any others, his Character, both in his own time, ^h and since, hath been more peculiarly struck at: The Testimony of Enemies hath been as considerable in his Favour as that of Friends; for upon a fam'd Dispute between a Christian and a Rabbin, about this very Subject of the *Jewish Law*, the latter, being press'd with Arguments from St. *Paul*, own'd, that they *could have long ago ruin'd Christianity, had it not been for that Paul*. ⁱ *Lucian* singles him out for the Subject of his wicked and profane Mirth, think-

^h Vide Theodoret. præf. in Pauli. Ep.

ⁱ In Philopatr.

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ing by that means most effectually to asperse the Christian Doctrine in its most eminent Apostle. But the *Ebionites* took the most pains in defaming him, which they did to stifle that Evidence that might be brought from him against them; they call'd him an Apostate from the Law, and rejected his Epistles; by which they plainly appear'd to have more Skill and Consistency with themselves than *Nazarenus*, who pretends to accommodate, two things the most inconsistent, the Doctrine of S. *Paul* with the eternal Obligation of Judaism. He had acted more uniformly, if, whilst he defam'd the Character of this great Apostle, he had at the same time spoke out, and deny'd his Writings.

There are three Epistles that are more especially levell'd against the Law, that to the *Romans*, to the *Galatians*, and to the *Hebrews*; but he treats the same Argument in a different way in these several Writings. He shews in that to the *Romans*, that both the Law of Nature, and that of the *Jews*, were imperfect without the Gospel, and that no moral Works could justify, without Grace. The Design of that to the *Galatians*, is to shew, that the Performance of the ceremonial Part, and more particularly Circumcision, was not only foreign to, but inconsistent with the Righteousness of Faith. And in that to the *Hebrews*, it is shew'd, that the several legal Attornements, were so many Types and Shadows

dows of the *Messiah*, which therefore with the reason of them, did expire at his coming. I shall select one Argument from each of these, and if they belong only to *Jews*, and not at all to *Gentiles*, as I am persuaded they do, *Nazarenus's* Plan of Christianity must of course fall.

Now in the first place, the Proofs that *St. Paul* brings from the Insufficiency of legal Righteousness, belong solely to the *Jews*, and do absolutely prove their discharge from the Law. For by *the works of the law no flesh shall be justified*^k. But now the righteousness of God is manifested without the law, being witnessed by the law and the prophets: As if he had said, the Performances of *Jews* are too deficient, both in kind and degree, to merit God's acceptance; and therefore that Justification which he admits, is not given with regard to the *Jewish* Law, but without any relation to it; though it hath this Benefit indeed from the Law, that the Author of this Justification is attested by the Types of the Law, and the Predictions of the Prophets; so that by this we do not wholly condemn the Law as sinful, but shew the true use of it. This I am persuaded is the sense of the words; and as the tenour of this, and all the following Chapters, is to shew the insufficiency of legal Righteousness, so that in-

* Rom. iii. 20.

sufficiency could only belong to *Jews*. The believing *Gentiles* were not, nor indeed could be concern'd in the Argument. To what Purpose should they be told of the Weakness of those Works, that they had never practis'd, or the Insufficiency of that Righteousness that they had no Notion of, nor no Hope in; and how could this great Apostle have been so elaborately trifling, as to dissuade them from that sort of Confidence, to which of all others they had no Tendency or Inclination? But the Argument did especially affect the *Jews*, whether believing or otherwise, who were dispos'd so much to establish *their own Righteousness*, as to reject or lessen the *Righteousness of Faith*; their external Performances would naturally encourage that Confidence that was inconsistent with the Hope in *Christ*, and that Poverty of Spirit which he had requir'd. They would of Course fall from Grace, or have less thankful Notions of it; and the more Hope they had in the Law, the less Sense they would have of the Gospel.

But besides, it appears from the preceding Verse, and from other Places, that the Apostle address'd himself singly to *Jews*^m, and having gone through the Insufficiency of moral Works without Faith, in the first Chapter; the rest of the Epistle is especially levell'd a-

^m Chap. vii. v. 1, &c.

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gainst the Confidence the *Jews* had in *Abraham* their Father, &c. Notions to which the *Gentiles* were utter Strangers.

Again, when he sets forth the Notion of *Christian Liberty*, in which he bids the *Galatians* to stand, and to be no more entangled in the Yoke of Bondage, he undoubtedly means the believing *Jews*. For how could the *Gentiles* be said to be made free who had never been bound? and with what Propriety could they be directed not to be entangled again with the Yoke of Bondage, who had never as yet submitted to it? And I would observe here the Conformity of *St. Paul's* Expressions with *St. Peter's*; the Apostle of the Circumcision call'd the *Jewish Law* a Yoke that neither they nor their Fathers were able to bear, and so doth *St. Paul* in this Place. But it is farther to be observ'd, that the *Jews* must have serv'd God upon harder Terms than the *Gentiles*, if they were singly to bear this heavy Yoke of the Law, nor would it have agreed with the Justice of him who is no Acceptor of Persons, and puts no Difference between *Jew* and *Gentile*, to require severer Service of the one than the other.

Again, those Arguments which shew the Law to be given only for a Time do affect the *Jews* only: as when it is said that the

ⁿ Gal. v. i.

Law ° was given because of Transgressions untill the promis'd Seed should come; here the Authority of the Law is limited till the Coming of Christ the promised Seed; and so the Law was our School-Master to bring us to Christ, that we may be justify'd of Faith, but Faith being come we are no longer under the Schoolmaster. Where two things are observable, that St. Paul by including himself in the first Person refers plainly to the believing Jews, of which he was one, but when he speaks to the Gentiles, which he doth Ch. iv. v. 8. he then speaks in the second; but he must farther mean the Jews only, because the Law was not a School-master to the Gentiles, who were never subject to its Tuition.

I will but offer one Argument more, which shall be taken from the Epistle to the Hebrews, and indeed needs no Comment to prove it belonging to the Jews, when the whole Epistle is directed only to them. ^p If the first Covenant had been perfect, there had been no Place sought for a second, and that ^q in mentioning a new Covenant he had made the first old, but that which is old and decaying is near abolishing. As the Gentiles were not included in the old Covenant, the Law could be only said to expire in respect of the

° Gal. iii. 19, &c.

q v. 13.

p Heb. viii. 7.

Jews; but then what must become of *Nazarenus's* Plan of Christianity, if the Law that must support it be repeal'd? How will he maintain this double Church, if the Consequence of this Repeal be that *Jew* and *Gentile* are made one, and that the Enmity between them was taken away, which would never have ceas'd if two different Institutions were perpetually to subsist in the same Body. I beg no Pardon of *Nazarenus* for using a Book against which he seems to make Exception, he saith that the *Scope of the Author to the Hebrews is obscure, if not unintelligible*, and therefore promiseth a Treatise of the end of Sacrifices to explain it; it is very easy for a Man of his Genius to promise Books which he dare not or cannot write; but if he should, I will venture before-hand to affirm, that the Holy Scriptures will receive as little Benefit from his Pains, as that Religion, which they teach, hath done from his Example.

St. *Paul* was the fullest of this Doctrine of the Law's being repeal'd, from his Character as Apostle of the *Gentiles*; but tho' he was the only Person who wrote clearly upon it, yet he was not singular in his Opinion. He communicated this very Doctrine to the chief Apostles at *Jerusalem*, and received their Concurrence and Approbation, which in a Point of that Consequence was as the

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^r Ancients observe, absolutely necessary. He did it indeed privately, for fear of giving Offence to the believing *Jews*, who were as yet generally averse to this Doctrine. When he came to *Jerusalem* the last time, he immediately resorted to *James* the Bishop of the Place, and appears to have held Fellowship and Communion with him, notwithstanding that he preach'd the abolishing of that Law, which *James* and the rest continu'd to observe. But the Testimony of St. *Peter* doth most abundantly and beyond all Exception acquit him of the Charge of Singularity. He who was the Apostle of the Circumcision, who had been secretly and openly reprov'd by him, yet ^r much to his Honour attests those Writings of St. *Paul*, wherein both the Repeal of the *Jewish* Precepts and his own Failings are recorded. As also our beloved Brother Paul, according to the Wisdom given unto him, hath wrote to you. As also in all his Epistles, speaking in them of these things in which there are some things hard to be understood, which the Unlearn'd and Igno-

^r Κατ' ἰδίαν ὁ τοῖς δοκῶσιν ἀνέθετο ἐπὶ Βαρνάβᾳ καὶ Τίτῳ. ἵνα ᾗτοι μαρτυρεῖς ἀξιώπιστοι γένηται πρὸς τὰς ἐγκαλεῖσας, ὅτε ἔδδ' τοῖς ἀποστόλοις ἑδοξεν ἐναντίον εἶναι, ἀλλὰ βεβαιῶσι κήρυγμα τὸ τοιούτον. *Chrys. in Galat.* Cum ipse Apostolus Paulus post ascensionem Domini de Cælo vocatus, si non inveniret in carne Apostolos quibus communicando & cum quibus conferendo Evangelium ejusdem Societatis esse appareret, Ecclesia illi omnino non crederet. *Aug. in Gelat.*

^r Greg. Mag. lib. 2. Hom. 18. in Ezek.

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rant wrest, as they do the other Scriptures, to their own Destruction. I must tell Nazarenus, that this Testimony of St. *Peter* is a better Argument that these two great Apostles agreed in their Sentiments, than the Citation which he brings from a forg'd Letter of *Peter* to *James*, is of their Disagreement; and it is most unsupportable Impudence in him to cite as genuine a wretched Forgery of the *Ebionites*; one can scarce tell whether his Intention of vilifying St. *Paul*, or the Method he useth to do so, be the more detestable.

This sorry unbelieving Critick governs his Skill by his wicked Principles, and hath no other way to judge of spurious and genuine Books than their Opposition to Christianity. I must add, that the Writers of the Apostolical Age were so far from believing any Difference of Sentiments in these two Pillars of the Church, that they generally join them together. *Clement*,^v who had been appointed Bishop of *Rome* by *Peter*, and must be suppos'd to know his Predecessor's Mind, gives the highest Character of St. *Paul*'s Actions and Preaching. *Ignatius* and *Polycarp*, who were conversant more particularly with

^r 2 Pet. iii. 15.

^v Ἀφ' ἑλόν ὁ Παῦλος ὑπομονῆς βραβεῖον ἀπέχεν. — Κήρυξ
 ἡρώδης ἐν τῇ ἀναβολῇ καὶ τῇ δούσῃ τὸ θῆναϊον τ' πίστεως αὐτῆ
 κλίῃ ἔλαβεν, δικαιοσύνην διδάξας ὅλον τ' κόσμον. Clem. Rom.
 Ep. i. c. 5.

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St. *John*, do^w the same, and that in Works now receiv'd as genuine by all the World. So early and so extensive was the Authority of St. *Paul*, that his Epistles were received throughout the whole Church from the beginning, and the Doubtfulness of that to the *Hebrews*, was owing to no other Cause than the Omission of his Name in the Title. It appears from the whole, that *Nazarenus* as little understands the Writings of St. *Paul*, as he reverences his Character; and I think my Pains well spent in rescuing both from his Slanders. I have said probably more upon the Subject than the Objections of a Man deserve who hath offer'd little to the Purpose, but I profess to follow a Rule laid down by that Apostle, for whom I have been pleading, of *putting to Silence the Ignorance of foolish Men*.

οὐχ ὡς Πέτρος ἔ Παῦλος ἀγλαότομαι ὑμῖν. Ign. ad Rom. Παῦλος Συμύσαι ἔ ἡγιασμένον ἔ μακαριζήμενον, ἀξιομακαρίσαι, ἔ ἡγούμαι μοι ὑπὸ τὰ ἴχνη διέβηται, ὅταν Θεὸς ἐπιτύχω. Idem ad Ephes. Οὐτε γὰρ ἐγὼ ἔτι ἄλλος τις ὅμοιος ἐμοὶ διὸ καὶ κατακολυθῆται τῇ σοφίᾳ ἔ μακαρίῃ καὶ ὀνόματι Παύλου, ὃς ἡγόρευεν ὡς ὑμῖν ——— ἐδίδαξεν ἀκριβῶς καὶ βεβαίως τὸ πρὸς ἀληθείας λόγον. Polycarp. Ep. ad Phil.

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

THE Writings of *St. Paul* do abundantly expose *Nazarenus's* original Plan of Christianity; and the Concurrence of the other Apostles with him, which hath been prov'd, is sufficient to justify and authorize his Opinion. But I mean to deal more fairly with *Mr. Toland*, than to take Advantage of him from an Author that he doth not like. I will give up *St. Paul's* Writings, and still contest the Matter with him; I will suppose him not only an Advocate for, but a Member of the *Ebionite* Sect, and for his farther Reproof and Information, assert the Repeal of the *Jewish* Law from the Constitution of that Law it self.

The Reason and Intent of the *Jewish* Precepts sufficiently shew them to be of a temporary kind, and not calculated for Perpetuity. The greater part of them is manifestly design'd to prevent that Idolatry which was then very frequent in the neighbouring Nations. They were not, as some have thought, given out of Compliance, but out of direct Abhorrence of the idolatrous Customs. Hence many of the * Ancients have call'd the Cere-

* *Const. Ap. lib. i. cap. 6. Chrysostom. Orat. 2. ad Judæos. Autor operis imperfecti in Matthæum, cap. viii. v. 3. Hieronym. Comm. in Jerem. cap. vii.*

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monial Law (*νόμον δευτέρωθεν*) the *second Law*; they suppos'd that the Moral Part was only God's primary Intention, but the other was not enacted, till it was made necessary by the worship of the Golden Calf. I cannot say that this is strictly true, but there seems some colour for it from a Passage in *Amos*^y, *Have ye offer'd unto me Sacrifices and Offerings in the Wilderness forty Years, O House of Israel?* The *Israelites* coming out of *Ægypt* had a great Tendency to the Superstition of that Countrey, and were therefore to be restrain'd from it by contrary Precepts. The Sacrifices of ^z Sheep and Oxen were particularly instituted in Opposition to the Idolatry of the *Egyptians*, who worshipp'd these Animals. Most of the negative Precepts which have not an inherent moral Goodness, may be accounted for in the same way. Thus the eating of Blood being an idolatrous Rite, is forbid the Children of *Israel*, as is also for the same Reason the Prohibition of Groves, and of making Altars of hewn Stone, of wearing the Cloaths of different Sexes, of seething Flesh in Milk, with many other Precepts, which however they may now appear unaccountable, were then worthy of the divine Appointment, to prevent the Pagan Superstitions of that Time.

^y Chap. v. *ῥ*. 23.

^z Maimonides *More Nevochim*. P. iii. c. 46. Marsham. *Can. Chron.* ad sæc. 9.

Maimonides, the acuteſt of all the *Rabbins*, confeſſeth that the firſt Intention of their Law was to remove Idolatry, and all that had a Tendency to it; and he farther obſerves, that if we knew more particularly the ſeveral Rites of the old *Zabii*, in Oppoſition to whoſe Practice the ceremonial Precepts were given, we might eaſily account for thoſe Rules of Sacrifices, which are at preſent unknown. This particular Solution of the ſeveral *Jewiſh* Rites ſhew'd the Reaſons of their Law, and conſequently the Law it ſelf to be temporary, and therefore this very Book of *Maimonides* was cenſur'd by the *Jews* of that time, as making too large Conceſſions to the Chriſtians.

In the firſt Ages of the World there was a much greater Diſpoſition to Idolatry, than ſince; Men's Minds being not poliſh'd nor abſtracted enough by Arts and Sciences, lean'd very much to a ſenſual Worſhip, and were not as yet fit for a more ſpiritual Inſtitution. This was the Caſe of the *Iraelites*, who were therefore by divine Wiſdom amus'd with many Precepts, that had ſome Significancy in them, and kept them clear of the tempting Pomp of idolatrous Worſhip. The firſt *Iſraelites* were like Children who are unfit for more exalted Rules, and were train'd by ſlow Steps to the Maturity of Religion. While the Memory of *Ægyptian* Superſtition was freſh
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in their Minds, they were prone to Idolatry, but as that wore off in time, and Arts and Sciences flourish'd, the Disposition to Idolatry ceas'd, which, in Answer to *Nazarenus's* Query, is the true Reason why the *Jews* were so prone to that Worship before the Captivity, and not in the least guilty of it after. It follows from hence therefore, that the Reason of the Law being in a great measure to prevent Idolatry, and that End being now answer'd, the People being no longer expos'd to the same Danger, the Law, as to the Reason and Use of it, had ceas'd long before our Saviour's Incarnation.

But farther, the great Change that must be made in the Law, from the coming of the *Messias*, shews the Constitution of it to be temporary. The legal Ceremonies are properly said to be the *Image and Representation of heavenly things*, and the Law is said to have the *Shadow of good things*, and not the *Substance of the things themselves*: That is, they prophetically typify'd the *Messias*, and that Institution which he was to reveal. Their Passover did in many Particulars typify the salutary Sufferings of *Christ*, who is for that Reason call'd the Lamb of God; and all their other Sacrifices, which only aton'd in part, prefigur'd that sufficient Oblation which he made for the Sins of all Mankind. It appears very evident, that the Law was in this Sense

Sense a Schoolmaster to bring us to Christ; these legal Ordinances being Types of something future, when the thing represented by them was come, were of course cancell'd and made useless. For this reason, some of the oldest *Jews* finding this Tendency of their Law to the *Messiah*, have made this Concession, that the new Covenant promis'd by the Prophets, was a new Law to be instituted by the *Messiah*, though of late they seem to have given up this Opinion. And I question not but we should meet with many Testimonies of this kind in their oldest Books, if they had not been craftily suppress'd.

The ceremonial Precepts must of course cease at the coming of the *Messiah*, since the very Reason and use of them are taken away by him. For to what purpose should they attend at those Sacrifices, that were only the Types and Shadows of a much greater Sacrifice already offer'd? With what Gratitude could they celebrate in the Passover the Deliverance from *Egypt*, when they had a later and far more valuable one to commemorate in the Redemption? And how consistently could they praise God in the Feast of Tabernacles for the old Law, when they have much more reason to do so for the new one of the Gospel? The celebration of their old Festivals became not only useless, but inconsistent with their Christian Obligations; and their former Deliverances, how great soever, were inferior

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to, and therefore cancell'd by the Blessing of Christ's Incarnation. They must have had a low sense of the Privileges of Christianity, if the Gratitude for these did not set aside all their esteem for their national Blessings as *Jews*. I would therefore observe, what *Nazarenus* may apply to himself, if he pleases, that the Zeal for the *Jewish* Rites, did naturally prompt Believers to a lower and more contemptuous sense of the Author of Christianity; and it is therefore probable that the *Nazareans* did not at first distinguish themselves by the Denial of our blessed Lord's Divinity, but were led to it by degrees from their attachment to the *Jewish* Rites; since the more respect they had for these, the less of Reverence they would have for their Redeemer. The experience probably of these ill effects of *Judaism*, made ^a *Ignatius* so earnest in warning the Christians of his time, not to listen to it; and he for that reason affirms, that it was a thing contradictory, to call upon *Jesus Christ*, and yet to *Judaize*. If therefore *St. Paul* had been silent in this matter, the reason of the thing would have shew'd the *Jewish* Law to be repeal'd by the coming of Christ; and this doth farther suggest to me, that as the *Messiah* must set aside

^a 'Εάν τις Ἰουδαϊσμὸν ἐρμηνεύῃ ὑμῖν μὴ ἀκέσῃ αὐτῷ. ad Rom.
 "Ἀποκρίνεις Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν καλεῖν καὶ Ἰουδαΐζειν, ὃ γὰρ Χριστιανισμὸς οὐκ
 οἷς Ἰουδαϊσμὸν ἐπίστυν, ἀλλ' Ἰουδαϊσμὸς εἰς Χριστιανισμὸν. Idem
 Ep. ad Magnes.

the Law by his coming, how little *Nazarenus* may be suppos'd to believe in him, whilst he asserts the Perpetuity of the *Jewish Republick*.

The words eternal and everlasting, that are apply'd to the old Covenant, seem to contradict this temporary Reason of the Law. But this apparent Contradiction is owing to the mistaken sense of the Hebrew word, which doth not signify eternal, but only durable. The word is not, as *Nazarenus* suggests, *Sophistically evaded*, but truly and properly explained; one may guess from hence, what skill this Hypercritick hath in the Scriptures, that can be so impos'd upon by the letter of a Translation. I insist upon it, that the word (עולם) which we render everlasting, signifies only *for an Age*, according to its true meaning; and this Assertion is not only confirm'd by the Confession of *Jews*, but by the common use of it in parallel Places. Thus the Land of *Judea* is call'd *an Inheritance for ever*, though the Possession of it ceas'd long ago; the Servant who continu'd till the *Jubilee*, is said to be a *Servant for ever*; and *Samuel's* standing before the *Lord for ever*, is only meant of the Days of his Life. The Hebrew word doth not mean Perpetuity, but Duration, and either signifies the compass of fifty Years to the common *Jubilee*, or the interval of time to the *Messias*, the grand *Jubilee* of all. The Precepts of the *Jewish*

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Law cannot therefore be prov'd perpetual from the true sense of the Text; and I have likewise this farther Proof from the most eminent *Jews*, that when they would express Perpetuity, they make use of ^b another word.

All this put together, gives me reason to believe that the Christians are so far from being too much prejudic'd against the *Jewish* Law, that they probably extend the Obligation of it too far. I am well satisfy'd that the temporary Reason of the several parts of it, is not so rightly understood, nor so exactly distinguish'd as it ought. If we go through the several Divisions of it, ceremonial, judicial, and moral, we may find each of them misapply'd in their turn; most certainly the ceremonial ceaseth, both as to the Obligation and Use of it, as soon as any *Jew* embraces Christianity.

The first Christians establish'd the Observation of the Lord's Day, rather by Example, than direct Precept, yet for some time they were tender of wholly laying aside the *Jewish* Sabbath; they, for greater Security kept both, and particularly forbid fasting upon *Saturday*, which Canon is still retain'd in the *Eastern* Church, but they seem'd to be more cautious in this matter than was necessary; for it is most certain, that the keeping of this Sabbath, was a part of the ceremonial Law,

^b David. Kemli in radice לד .

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which appears from *Deut.* v. 15. where the observance of it is enforc'd from a Reason particular to the *Jews*, and therefore as such, had no obligation upon Christians. This is sufficient to answer the Scruple of the Sabbatharians, whom *Nazarenus* approves, for the same reason that he doth all other Persons and Things that are against the Establishment; it is to be confess'd, that if the Sabbath be observ'd upon account of the *Jewish* Law, then it ought to be kept on *Saturday*; but it is evident that the observation of the Lord's Day is owing to the Authority of the Church; and it is to be wonder'd that some should be so zealous for the Thing, and yet deny that Power by which it was establish'd. *John Calvin* was so sensible of the force of this Argument, that he once deliberated whether he should not abolish the Day, and had actually done so, if he had not been dissuaded from it.

I have known some Christians much disturb'd about the Lawfulness of Usury, or taking Money upon legal Interest, from the strict Prohibition of it by the *Jewish* Law; but this appears to be a needless Scruple, because it was only a part of their judicial Law, which according to the *Rabbins* did not oblige out of *Judaea*. The *Jews* were forbid Usury, from a Reason particular to their Situation; because living in an inland Country, and having no means of improving Money by Traffick, all Usury would have become the
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greatest Oppression. The Christians are not ty'd down by this Prohibition, any other way than as the general Sentiments of Charity and Compassion direct them, since our Saviour did not think fit to repeat it.

But the moral part of the Law bids the fairest claim to oblige all Converts from *Jews*, yet it is certain that all Disputes about the continuance of it seem unnecessary among Christians: If they be oblig'd to observe the Gospel, the moral Law is included in it, as the part in the whole, the extent of Duty being much enlarg'd by our Saviour's Sermon upon the Mount. If we are call'd to Mercy and Charity, there can be no Question about Justice and Restitution; if we are not to indulge causeless Anger and Revenge, we are certainly restrain'd from Murder; if the secret distant Desires be prohibited, then undoubtedly the gross Acts of Concupiscence; if we are not to do Evil to a Neighbour under the greatest Provocations, we are consequently not to do it without any Provocation at all. The moral Law therefore doth not oblige in Respect of the *Jewish* Dispensation, but as it is by our Saviour included in the terms of his Covenant; the ten Commandments are so far in force, as re-enacted by the Son of God, though his Followers must go farther in their Duty than these literally express, if they would exceed the Righteousness of the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*. It pleas'd divine Providence,
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for evidently wise Reasons, not to reveal those more perfect Rules of Morality, till the World was better prepar'd to receive them; nor could they have been preach'd with tolerable Success, without the Authority and Encouragement of the Son of God in Person. It will be now very easy to shew, that our Saviour did not destroy the Law, but fulfil it, and yet to affirm that *Nazarene* hath not said one true or pertinent thing upon the Subject. He fulfill'd the ceremonial Law, in fulfilling those Types and Shadows, whereof he himself was the Substance; and he fulfill'd the moral Part, by ^c improving and enlarging the several Duties of it; and it was therefore in both these Senses true, that *Heaven and Earth shall pass away, before one jot or tittle of the Law shall fail*; for certainly that cannot be said to fail that is perfected and finish'd.

^c Οὐ γὰρ ἀναίρεσις τῶν προτέρων, ἀλλ' ἐπίστασις καὶ πληρωσις, ἣν τὰ λεγόμενα, τῷ γὰρ μὴ φοιῶντι οὐκ ἀναίρεσις τοῦ μὴ ἀρνούμεναι ἀλλὰ πληρωσις καὶ πλείων ἀσφάλεια, καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν ἄλλων ἀπάντων, Chrys. Hom. 16. in Matthæum. Sive quia ea quæ antea propter infirmitatem audientium rudia & imperfecta fuerant, suâ prædicatione compleverit, iram tollens & vicem talionis excludens & occultam in mente concupiscentiam, Hieronym. Comm. in Matthæi cap. 5.



CHAP. XII.

Of Abstinence from Blood, and things strangled.

THE Liberty that is generally taken of eating Blood, and things strangled, appears at first sight to be a Deviation from apostolical Rule, and primitive Practice. *Nazarenus* is much offended at those who take this Liberty without giving a better Reason for't, and then gives them one of his own, which is as trifling as it is new; he accounts for it by his original Plan, which is with him the universal Solver of all Difficulties, and supposeth this Command to extend only to Christians living in a *Jewish* Society. But I will venture to affirm, that the Christian Liberty in this Point needs not his Defence, and that the Reason assign'd for it by *Nazarenus* is of all others the most insufficient.

If the apostolical Decree made at the Council of *Jerusalem* doth relate to the eating of Blood, I will agree with *Nazarenus*, and probably it is the only thing in which we shall agree, that the common Practice is inexcusable; the Reasons of *Grotius* and others, if that Interpretation be allow'd, are unanswerable,

able, and it is but a weak Plea to pretend that that Decree was made for a temporary Reason, when no such Reason is assign'd. But I am well assur'd that the Words do not relate to the eating of Blood, but to the Effusion of human Blood, Murder being generally so express'd in the Scripture Style. I am not singular in this Interpretation, but have many Ancients on my side. The primitive Practice was apparently against eating of Blood, but it is much to be question'd whether it was grounded upon the Words of this Decree; because some that abstain'd from Blood^d interpreted the Decree as I do, and withal, because if the primitive Church had thought it clear from that Decree, they would not have made another^e Canon about it. But that many interpreted *Blood* concerning Murder, is evident from the reading of St.^f *Cyprian*, the shedding of Blood; *Tertullian* likewise so interprets it, as do also *Chrysostom* and *Pacianus*; and St. *Austin* attests this Interpretation from others. One would think it wou'd not have been reckon'd among the *necessary things*, if it had

^d Sufficit & hic servatum esse Mœchiæ & fornicationi locum honoris sui inter Idololat. iam & homicidium; interdictum enim sanguinis, multo magis humani, intelligemus. *Tertullian. de pudicitia. vide eundem in Apologet.*

^e Vide Can. Apost. 55.

^f *Cyprian. Testim. lib. 3. Tertullian. de pud. Pacianus de pœnit. Chrysost. Hom. 33. in Act. Quod alii non sic intelligunt, sed à sanguine præceptum esse abstinendum, ne quis homicidio se contamine. Aug. ad Faustum, lib. 32.*

only related to external Food. But the *Gentiles* from their licentious Manners, and inveterate Customs, needed to be forewarn'd of the Sin of shedding human Blood. Murder being generally occasion'd by Revenge, a Passion not sufficiently restrain'd by the Law of Nature, the Authority of the Apostles was necessary to create in the *Gentiles*, unus'd as yet to Forgiveness, an Abhorrence of it. They were not only Parties to murder from the Violence of their Revenge, but they were prompted to be Actors and Connivers at it from more cool Passions, their Interest or their Diversions. The ³ exposing of Infants whom they did not care to bring up, to certain, or at least doubtful Deaths, was contrary both to human Compassion and paternal Affection; yet nothing was more common among the *Greeks* and *Romans*; so were also the Shews of the Gladiators, where many of the best Rank and Reputation attended: both these Customs had a near Relation to the Effusion of human Blood, but yet were practis'd without the Interdict of Laws, the Censure of Philosophers, or, as far as we may judge, the Remorses of Conscience. The same is to be said of Fornication, which was tolerated in a very publick manner by the *Gentiles*, was practis'd in some of

Ἡ βρισην ἐκθεσις ὡς καὶ πολλοῖς τῶν ἄλλων ἱερῶν, ἐνεκὲν τῆς φυσικῆς ἀπαρθρωπίας χειρότερος ἀσέβημα γέγονεν. Philo de legibus.

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their religious Feasts, and was not condemn'd as immoral by some great^h Philosophers.

It hath been thought by some an Objection against this interpretation of Blood, that there could be no occasion to prohibit Christians the Act or Connivance of Murder; but it is easy to answer that the *Gentiles* could not be speedily drawn from their corrupt Practices, nor besides could they as yet be suppos'd well enough acquainted with the Christian Doctrine, no part of the Apostolical Writings being as yet publish'd. There was no more Impropriety in prohibiting Murder, than Fornication; the latter being known to be equally inconsistent with evangelical Purity. But Purity and Charity being two things that distinguish the Christian Institutions, and in a great measure unknown to the Heathens, were a proper Subject of an Apostolical Decree. This is a Reason with me, why the Prohibition of Blood should not be referr'd to Food, but to the Effusion of human Blood; and it hath the more weight, because that of things offer'd to Idols carry'd a moral turpitude along with it, as it paid respect to Idols, and is therefore mention'd by *St. Paul*, whereas that of Blood is not so.

The Reason of this Decree being little understood, hath occasion'd that general Mistake in the subject matter of it; it was not, as is

^h Cicero in Oratione pro M. Coelio.

thought by many, enacted out of Compliance with the *Jews* or *Jewish* Converts, but in direct Opposition to the *Gentile* Licence, by which the Pollutions of Idols, the Practice of Murder and Fornication were most common; and there is some Proof of this from the following Verse, for *Moses of old time hath in every City them that preach him, being read in the Synagogues every Sabbath Day.* As if he had said, it is very necessary to inculcate into the *Gentile* Converts the Abhorrence of Idolatry, Murder, and Fornication; things that they are much us'd to, and cannot without Difficulty be wean'd from by the Christian Belief; but this Caution is not so needful to the *Jewish* Converts, who have been taught better from the frequent reading of *Moses's* Writings. The apostolical Decree abridg'd the moral Conduct of these Converts in a short Compass, which is very plain from that additional Verse cited by the old Fathers, tho' omitted in our present Editions, *of not doing to others what they would not have done to themselves.*

Some have thought that the other rule of *things strangled*, determin'd the Sense of the Place to eating Blood only, but it is certain that this reading was unknown to some of the ⁱ Ancients, especially to the *Latins*; it seems

ⁱ Iren. Cypr. Gaudent. Vide Millii Edit. Oxon. Nov. Testam.

to be a gloss upon Blood made by some Transcriber, and by Degrees became part of the Text. St.^k *Ambrose* is of this Opinion, and affirms that the Mistake came from some *Greek* Transcribers. Probably the Practice of the primitive Church may be thought an Objection to this Interpretation, but there was ground enough for their Practice, from the Precept to *Noah*. Few of the Fathers cite the Apostolical Decree for their Practice, but most of them cite that in *Genesis*; though it must be confess'd, upon whatsoever Account they abstain'd from Blood, their Abstinence from it was a happy Vindication of their Innocence, and a Proof that they had no ^{ἡνέκεν} ^{δείπνα} no execrable Rites of drinking human Blood, which was falsely objected to them by the malicious *Pagans*.

Nazarenus hath made no Discovery, and it would be great wonder if he made a religious one, that the first Christians abstain'd from Blood, which all the old Apologists mention; their Abstinence from it afforded an unexceptionable Answer to the Cavils of their Pagan Adversaries at that time; and it is at this Day an evident Proof how tenacious they were of their Faith, and how timorous of approaching the Borders of a Transgression, since they certainly did more in this case than

^k Comment in Galatas.

^l Euf. Eccl. Hist. lib. v. c. i. Tertull. Apolog. c. ix. Minucius Felix.

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they were oblig'd to. They observ'd the Rule more out of abundant Caution, than a sense of strict Duty, and it was rather a matter of Ecclesiastical Discipline, than Christian Obligation. They govern'd this part of their Practice, not out of Obedience to the *Jewish* Law, which they were sure had expir'd; but to the Precept of *Noah*, which they unskillfully, though harmlessly, extended too far: and the Difficulties about eating Blood, &c. are owing to our not rightly distinguishing these two Rules, which are very different, both in their extent, and the reason of them. The former given to *Noah* by God, which is still obligatory to all Mankind, is rightly explain'd of^m not cutting off, and eating a Member from a live Beast. A mixture of Luxury and Cruelty, had probably made this very customary among the Unbelievers before the Flood, as it hath been since too much; and therefore God, when he gave the first Licence to eat Flesh, requir'd that Licence to be us'd tenderly and thankfully, and that they should not unnecessarily and cruelly sport with the Lives of these Creatures; he significantly by this taught Men Mercy and Compassion, which if they practis'd to the brute Animals, they would more probably do so to their Fellow Creatures. But the latter Precept of not

^m Vide Maimonidem in tract. de cibis prohibitis, cap. 5. item More Nevoch. part. 3. c. 48.

eating Blood, which was given to the *Jewish* People, was more extensive, including the Flesh of all Creatures that were not rightly kill'd, and was undoubtedly enjoin'd because of the ⁿ Idolatry of the neighbouring Nations. The Blood of their Sacrifices was reckon'd the Food of those impure Spirits to whom they offer'd; and therefore they could not eat any of it, without seeming to partake in an idolatrous Rite. This therefore was strictly prohibited to the *Jews*, as living among Nations affected with that kind of Superstition; and if there had been any of it still remaining, there is no doubt but it would have been as strictly forbid to the Christians. But the Apostolical Decree, for the Reasons I have before mention'd, had no relation to either of these Precepts. *Nazarenus* is mistaken with many others, and it is almost the only Mistake where he chanceth to have good Company, that the Precepts of Blood, &c. were given out of regard to the *Jews*, whereas they were given out of opposition to the *Gentile* Customs. These three Rules of Behaviour (for I vehemently suspect the fourth, of *things strangled*, not to belong to the Text) were enjoin'd to the *Gentile* Converts for their better Conduct, till they were acquainted more perfectly with the Christian Duties, which for want

ⁿ Maim. ib. c. 46. Just. Mart. Apol. Origen. contra Celsum, l. 8.

of the Apostolical Writings not yet publish'd, they did not know, and out of the Prejudices of Education they would not easily practise: Murder, Fornication, and Idolatry, were Crimes very dishonourable, and contrary to their holy Profession; but they were Crimes probably, for which they had not as yet a suitable Detestation. I am persuaded that this is the Sense of the Place, and hath no relation to the eating of Blood in Food; the Indulgence of Christians in this part of their Christian Liberty is not sinful, nor is there any grounds for Mr. *Toland* to complain of our Deviation from primitive Practice, or our Ignorance in primitive History; two things of all others, which he, considering his Behaviour and Writings, is very unfit to complain of.

The summ of the Matter is this, the Prohibition of Blood in the Apostolical Decree relates not to Food, but to the Effusion of it by Murder, and the Precept about it, in the ceremonial Law is abolish'd; so that the only remaining Obligation to abstain, is from the Precept of *Noah*, which hath been explain'd by the *Jews* themselves, of cutting off and eating any Member of a live Beast. The Practice of the Christians therefore, as I conceive, needs not, and wo be to them if they did need, the Vindication of *Nazarenus*, whose Defence is as dangerous, as his Commendations are disreputable. Whatever the Precept given

to *Noah* and his Sons means, the Christians, as their Posterity, are oblig'd by it, and if their Practice be opposite to the true meaning of it, they are blameable; but the Apostolical Decree not relating to this matter, and the *Jewish* Law being abolish'd, are certainly out of the Question.

I have enlarg'd the more upon this Head, because the Practice of eating Blood hath been the matter of Scruple to some, and Offence to others; but I hope sufficiently to have both clear'd up the Meaning of the Apostolical Decree, and vindicated the common Practice.

If this then be the Case, Mr. *Toland's* reconciling Pains become as unnecessary, as they are insufficient. He follows the receiv'd Interpretation of Blood, and yet justifies the common Practice of eating it, by supposing it given only to Christians residing among *Jews*, to prevent Scandal, but that in all other Places it is lawful. Wherein he is guilty of many Absurdities, for who besides himself ever thought that the Christians were Proselytes to *Judaism*, or whence can he prove that the Church of *Antioch*, a City at some distance from *Judæa*, and the Capital of Pagan Idolatry, was only compos'd of *Jews*? But I would farther ask upon what reason he can offer to prove that these Precepts were only given to avoid Scandal with the *Jews*, when no such thing is mention'd in the Text; what right hath he or any other to limit a general

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Law, by a particular Reason not therein specify'd; and if the Christians are blameable for making the Apostolical Decree temporary, is not he as much so for making it local? Besides, by the same Rule of Interpretation, Fornication is no Sin, except committed by Christians residing among *Jews*, and the Converts at *Antioch* were laid under Restraints, which if they had gone any where else, they had been free from.

Nazarenus is not hardy enough to apply this sort of Interpretation to this Prohibition, but he ventures to do it about the Pollutions of Idols, from the mistaken Passage of *St. Paul*. I would observe, that this Apostle never relax'd the Prohibition of eating things offer'd to Idols, but his Method of reasoning upon the Subject is not understood. It is usual with *St. Paul* to bring the words of an Objector, and then to answer them; and these words having been taken for his own, have bred great Difficulties in understanding him. This is matter of Fact in the seventh of the *Corinthians*, where he absolutely condemns things offer'd to Idols, but what is said for it is the Objection of another, as is evident from the fourth and eighth Verses of that Chapter. An Example of the same kind is to be seen in the third Chapter of the Epistle to the *Romans*, as also in many other Places; and this Method, if pursu'd cautiously, would probably clear up some Difficulties in his Epistles;
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the same Method, if follow'd in the Book of *Ecclesiastes*, which is evidently a Dialogue between a Believer and an Infidel, would adjust all the seeming Contradictions there. To conclude, the Apostolical Decree is not limited to Time or Places, but is in the same force it had at its first Delivery, and the several parts of it have been confirm'd by the subsequent Advice of *St. Paul*; but as the Practice of the Church hath not broke in upon this Decree, it needs not the weak Defence of *Mr. Toland*.



CHAP. XIII.

*An Explication of some Texts of
Scripture.*

I Have abundantly shew'd the Weakness of *Nazarenus's* Plan of Christianity, not only from the Writings of *St. Paul*, but the very reason and end of the *Jewish* Law. But before I have done, I must rescue some Texts of Scripture from the ignorant or wilful Misapplications of this Unbeliever, who treats the holy Writings with as little Skill as he doth reverence, and is as much a Stranger to their Style and Language, as he is to that

Faith, Humility and Seriousness, which they teach.

The first that I shall mention is, *John* i. 17. *The Law was given by Moses, but Grace and Truth came by Jesus Christ*; the Law, saith he, was given by *Moses*, but Grace and Truth came by *Jesus Christ*, who confirm'd that Law. May not one from hence say, without breach of Truth or Charity, that he hath here deny'd the Grace of God, since the Law is frequently oppos'd to Grace; and what Opinion must he be suppos'd to have of Christianity and its Teacher, who supposeth no other Effect of our Lord's coming, but the Confirmation of the old Law? Are not here two Dispensations mention'd, and oppos'd to each other, not only in their different Teachers, but in their different Conditions and Effects? *Grotius* rightly observes, that *St. John* referr'd in this place to the Sect of the *Ebionites* (for that he design'd his Gospel against them is affirm'd by the Ancients) and therefore in opposition to their Notion, prefers the Terms of the Gospel to the Law. *The Law was given by Moses*, that is, a burthensome Institution, with many Types and Shadows, but little Comfort and Encouragement: but the more merciful Institution of *Jesus Christ*, instead of these Shadows substituted Truth and Reality; and instead of our own frail Endeavours, the effectual Assistance of that Holy Spirit, which was not before promis'd,

mis'd, or even known. This I am confident is the Sense of the Words, which is not only confirm'd by the concurrent Exposition of the Fathers, but by the whole Context.

Thus that the *Law was our School Master, to bring us to Christ, and that its Ordinances were blotted out, and nailed to Christ's Cross, were Phrases, as he saith^o, to be understood only of us Gentiles.* But I have shewn before, that the Law could be only said to be a School-Master to those who were govern'd by its Tuition, and therefore means the *Jews* only; and the same is as evident in the blotting out of the Hand-writing by our Saviour's Cross; but because it is of some moment I will examine it more particularly. The Expression is manifestly taken from the *Roman* Method of cancelling any promissory Note or Hand-writing, whereby the Debtor was discharg'd, and is therefore very properly apply'd to the Repeal of the Law; but the Words are falsely render'd by our Translation, though it is inexcusable for a Man who boasts of reading the Bible in original Language to be impos'd upon by a modern Translation, *the Hand-writing of Ordinances*, whereas the *Greek* Words can only be render'd blotting out *by Ordinances the Hand-writing against us.* Meaning very evidently that our

Lord, by ^p his own Evangelical Ordinances, cancell'd and repeal'd the troublesome Precepts of the *Jewish* Law. This Translation puts the Passage in a true Light, and makes it very clearly to be meant only of the *Jews*; besides, the Hand-writing could not be cancell'd in respect of any but those who were obliged by it; it was never *contrary to*, or burthensome to the *Gentiles*, and therefore the blotting out had no relation to them. But this is farther evident from the Context it self, for in the seventeenth Verse he tells them that the Distinction of Meats, the new Moons and Sabbaths, which were Matters in which the *Jews* only were concern'd, were only the Shadows of future things, but that *the Body*, that is, the Substance and Reality of them, was of *Christ*.

He likewise mistakes, and falsely applies a Passage in the *Corinthians*, *Is any Man call'd being circumcis'd; let him not become uncircumcis'd*; there is no way to express the ^a *Greek* of the Place in our Language, but the Expression is owing to a Custom of some at that time, who had that utter Derestation of the *Jewish* Rites, that by Arts of Surgery they would remove all the Marks of Circumcision; and therefore *St. Paul* adviseth against

^p Vide Chrysostom. in locum. Item Versionem Syriacam.

^a Μη περιτέμνηται. Vulg. Lat. non adducat præputium. Vide 1 Macc. c. i. v. 15. Id etiam à Symmachio factum autor est Epiphanius. Hinc fortè Judæi dicti recutiti.

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that Practice, and teacheth that though Circumcision was no longer necessary, yet to wear the Marks of it was not sinful.

But his choicest Interpretation is that of Works in St. *James's* Epistle, which he positively affirms to mean only those of the Levitical Law; which Assertion is so far from being true, that they have not once that Sense throughout the Epistle. The *Jewish* Converts having had the Necessity of Faith prest upon them by St. *Paul*, were probably some of those *that wrested* his Writings *to their own Destruction*; for they carry'd the Matter so far, much after the way of our Sectaries in the late Times, as to believe Faith without good Works sufficient to Salvation. This is the Mistake that St. *James* encounters, and he doth it in such a manner as to shew *Nazarenus's* Notion of Works to be false and ridiculous. It is plain that where he mentions the *Royal Law*, and *Law of Liberty*, he means the moral Law improv'd and enlarg'd by the Gospel; the Works likewise, that he teacheth them, appear to be no other than those of Humanity, Charity, and Purity. For by what other Works could they shew their Faith? not by Levitical Works, which had no relation to it. By what other Works was *Abraham* justify'd than that of a resign'd Obedience to Divine Will, in readily offering up his Son? By what other was *Rahab*, who was accepted for her Humanity in receiving the Spies,

Spies, not for conforming with the *Jewish Rites*? Lastly, When this Apostle describes *pure Religion*, he saith not one Word of *Jewish Ceremonies*, which is evident enough that he took them not for good Works.

There is therefore no need for this busy Intermeddler to reconcile the two Apostles, whose Doctrines are very consistent with each other. St. *Paul* teacheth, that Works of any kind, whether of the Ceremonial or Moral Law were, without Faith, insufficient; and that therefore all the World, without the Merits of a Redemer, was guilty before God. St. *James* finding this Doctrine misunderstood by some who join'd not their Practice to their Belief, shews what the Properties of this justifying Faith should be, that it should be active and lively, and exert it self eminently in good Works: that is, if Men truly believ'd in *Jesus Christ*, they would do readily what he had commanded, and take Care to make their Behaviour consistent with their Christian Profession. These are the Doctrines of the two Apostles, and, when so explain'd, are without the wicked Assistance of *Nazarenus*, reconcileable enough with each other.

I cannot omit observing, that as he hath actually perverted the Doctrine of Works, so he hath done little better with that of Faith; for though he sets forth the several Senses of it in Scripture, he doth not once mention the

the truest and most proper Sense, the Belief of *Jesus Christ*, and the Trust and Confidence in his Merits. This is the Sense of Faith, more especially in the Writings of *St. John*, who oppos'd this Doctrine of Faith in *Christ* to the unbelieving *Ebionites*, whom *Nazarenus* hath taken upon him to defend. This divine Apostle did not allow Faith to be only a general Profession of the Christian Name, but withal an hearty Belief that our Lord *Jesus* is the Son of God. But I take it for granted, and have reason enough for doing so, that this is no part of our Author's Creed; and indeed his Faith, if we take his own description of it, hath not only no Relation to our blessed Lord, but is withal most seraphick Nonsense. *Faith*, saith he^r, is an *internal Participation of the Divine Nature, irradiating the Soul, and externally appearing in Beneficence, Justice, and Sanctity, &c.* Not a Word here, of Expectation of things hoped for, according to *St. Paul*, or of believing in the Son of God, according to *St. John*; his Words are equally wise and intelligible, and give Reason to think that there may be such a thing in the World as an Enthusiastick Infidel.

^r P. 5. of the Pref.

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CHAP.



CHAP. XIV.

The Behaviour of Christians to Jews.

NAzarenus, by calling himself by that Name, and declaring for the Sentiments of the old *Nazaraeans*, hath been hitherto half *Jew* and half Christian; but now even that half is too much for him, and therefore he at last espouseth the whole Sentiments of the *Jews*. He insinuates, that the *true Christianity of the Jews was over-born by the more numerous Gentiles, and I am entirely satisfy'd*, saith he, *that were it not for this execrable Treatment, not a Jew but many Ages since had been likewise a Christian.* This convinces me, that he hath just as much of *Jewish* Knowledge, as he hath of Christian Belief. One would have expected that among the many Citations he hath glean'd up, he would have produc'd some broken mistaken Scrap to prove this; he should have shew'd from their own Books the Disposition they had to our Saviour *Christ*, even upon the Terms of keeping their Law: that there had been some Overtures of Accommodation propos'd on their Part, and reject-
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ed by the haughty Christians, which had occasion'd the Apostasy of the believing *Jews*, and the final Obstinacy of the rest. But I will tell him, what his Learning will not serve him to find out, that though they make the abolishing of the Law an Objection against the Christian Practice, yet they do not use that as a Plea for their own Conduct. I think not only the Honour, but the Truth of our holy Profession, so much concern'd in the Character of the first Christians, that I think it my Duty to wipe off those false and wicked Aspersions of Narrowness, Partiality, and Oppression, that he hath thrown upon them. Their Behaviour to the *Jews* was merciful and compassionate, and worthy of that Master who came to *save the lost Sheep of the House of Israel*; whilst that of the other was froward and peevish, envious and revengeful, as may be abundantly made out by their History.

The *Jews* were the first, and withal the greatest and most persevering Enemies our Faith ever met with. The *Gentiles* persecuted the Church, but could be Friends in their turn; but wherever a Christian met with a *Jew* in Power, he was sure to find him a Persecutor. Their first Act of Violence was upon our blessed Lord himself, and there was not a Murder or Cruelty executed upon his Followers till *Nero's* time, that came not sin-

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gly from them. [†] *St. Chrysostom* observes that the *Jews* were more vehement against the Converts from them to the Faith, than ever the *Gentiles* were against theirs, and shews the different Malice of one from the other. Their Violence was not the effect of Zeal for their Law, for the *Jewish* Converts, that till the Destruction of *Jerusalem* join'd the Observance of the Law to their Christian Belief, felt the severe effects of it. *St. Paul* tells the [†] *Thessalonians*, that they had the same Fate with the Churches in *Judæa*, for ye have suffer'd the same thing from your Countrymen, as they also from the *Jews*; and he refers to the same Cruelty of theirs in his Epistle to the *Hebrews*^v, when he tells them that they had endured a great fight of Afflictions, &c. How dispos'd they were to the Christian Faith, may be therefore seen by their Conduct towards those who profess'd it. A Profelyte to Christianity was, of all others, their greatest Aversion, they loaded them not only with Slanders, but even with all sorts of Oppression, when in their Power.

They were not check'd by the Power of the Christian Emperors from using these Insults; they were therefore forbid in one of the

[†] Καὶ διὰ πάντων δείκνυσιν, ὅτι ἔχ. ἔτας οἱ ἐκ Ἑλλήνων πιστοὶ-
σαντες ὑπὸ τῇ μδρόντων Ἑλλήνων ἐπολεμῶν, ὡς οἱ ἀπὸ Ἰουδαίων ὑπὸ
τῇ ὁμοφύλων ἡλαυνόντο. Hom. in Galat. cap. 2.

[†] 1 Ep. c. 2. ὕ. 4.

^v Cap. x. ὕ. 33.

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^w Imperial Rescripts, not to throw Stones at the Profelytes, which appears to be their common Practice: They were likewise upon account of their known Cruelty, forbid to have any Christian Servants, who were generally upon account of their Faith treated with the severest Rigour.

Their hatred to Christians far exceeded the Aversion which they had to *Gentile Nations*: For when *Ben Cozba*, the Rebel *Jew*, rais'd an Army against *Adrian*, he spent his whole Strength upon the * Christians only, and murder'd them, if they did not both deny and blaspheme *Jesus Christ*; this was the more remarkable too, because there was as yet at *Jerusalem* a Bishop of the Circumcision.

When the Power of Oppression was taken out of their Hands by the Civil Power, yet they still continu'd in the same degree of Rancour; they were the first to excite popular Clamours, or the Severity of the Magistrates against the Martyrs; they were not only consenting to, but bloody ^y Actors in their Murder, and sometimes oppos'd the Burial of their

^w Cod. Theodof. l. xvi. tit. 8. Eum, qui ex Judæo Christianus factus est, inquietare Judæos non liceat, vel aliquâ pulsare injuriâ. 16.

* Καὶ ὅ ἐν τῷ νῦν γενησῶν Ἰσραὴλῶν Πόλεμῳ Βαρχοχίβας ὁ τῶν Ἰσραὴλιν ἀπεστάσις ἀρχηγὴς Χριστιανῶν μόνος εἰς τιμωρίας θείας, εἰ μὴ ἀγνοῖτο Ἰησοῦς τὸ Χριστὸν καὶ βλασφημοῖεν ἀπάγους ἐκέλευσεν. Justin. Mart. Apol. 2.

^y Vide Epistolam Ecclesiæ Smyrnenfis de Martyrio Polycarpi.

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Bodies. But the greatest Instance of their Malice was, their spreading false and execrable Calumnies of our holy Faith among the Heathen. ^z They sent Messengers into all Parts, who represented the Believers as Atheists; and were the sole Authors of those ^a Falshoods relating to the sacred Rites of their Love Feasts, that their innocent and chaste Meetings were attended with inhuman Murders, and incestuous Licence. These Clamours gain'd some Belief at first, from the unbelieving Enemies of our Faith, and many of the Christian Servants were put upon the Rack to discover the certainty of them; but these Tortures had a quite other effect, tho' as ^b *Origen* informs us, those Calumnies were not perfectly ceas'd in his time. They were not content to instigate the Heathen Persecutors by false Clamours against the Believers, but they carry'd their Aversion one step farther, and would make Heaven not only a Witness to, but a Party to their Violence. It is the least known, though most certain instance of their Malice, that they made the Curses against *Jesus Christ*, and his Disciples, part of their

^z Ἰσχυροὶ ἐκκλησίᾳς ἀπὸ Ἱερουσαλὴμ ἐκλεξάμενοι τότε ἐξεπέμψατε εἰς πᾶσαν τὴν γῆν λέγοντες αἴρεσιν ἁθέον Χριστιανῶν πειρηνίσαι. Just. Martyr. Dialog. cum Tryph.

^a Καὶ δοκεῖ μοι ὡρμηλὴς Ἰουδαίᾳς πεποιηκέναι τοῖς καὶ τῷ ἀρχιμ. τῷ Χριστιανισμῷ κατασκευάσαι δυσφημίαν τῷ λόγῳ, ὡς ἄσφα καλῶσαντες παιδίον μεγαλαμβάνον αὐτῷ τῷ σαρκῶν, Origen. contra Celsum, l. 6.

^b Idem ibid.

Prayers. St. *Jerom* indeed hath been so far impos'd upon, as to believe that those whom they curs'd were the ^c *Nazaræan* Sect, not the whole Body of Christians; but he doth not only contradict others, but ^d himself in this matter; that Curse against the Christians was made near upon forty Years before the Destruction of *Jerusalem*, at which time there was no distinction of any such Sect from the whole Body; and besides, though they hated the *Jewish* Converts, yet they were not so violent against them, as they were against those that were not circumcis'd; for we have it from St. *Paul*, that some Believers were tempted to Circumcision, that they might not suffer Persecution from the *Jews*. They were so unaccountably averse to our Holy Faith, that they would not trust their Members to converse with Christians, or to hear their Discourses; and ^e *Baronius*, from a Story in the *Talmud*, shews that they would suffer any of their own Persuasion to perish, rather than be heard by a Christian, lest they should give some Attestation by this means to the Power of our blessed Lord. I could mention many more ^f Instances of their resolv'd Obstinacy in their own Persuasion, and

^c Ep. ad August.

^d Comm. in *Esaïam*.

^e Annal. Eccles. anno 63. c. 8.

^f Vide *Gothofredi* notas in Cod. Theod. lib. 16. tit. 8. l. 1. item *Socr.* lib. 7. c. 16. item *legem* 18. ejusdem tituli.

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their implacable Rudeness to ours; but what I have said is sufficient to shew that they had stopp'd their Ears to all Conversion.

The Christians were not at that time accountable for their hard-heartedness, endeavouring by all the tender Methods to reclaim and convince them. They trick'd them not out of their Christianity, as *Nazarenus* vilely insinuates, but they themselves resisted the Counsel of God, and were therefore cut off and rejected; for what Disposition can the *Jews* be suppos'd to have for that Faith which they wickedly traduc'd? How ready were they to be the Followers of *Christ Jesus*, whose Murderers they continu'd to applaud and justify? How willing to take up that Cross, which they frequently abus'd and insulted in Effigie? And lastly, how fit to be united to the Body of Believers, whom they curs'd in their Synagogues, and persecuted every where else? But yet these Indignities never extorted from the Christians one Resentment unworthy of their Profession; and as they shar'd with their great Master in their Oppressions, so they as faithfully imitated him in Compassion and Forgiveness. *St. Paul*, who had suffer'd as much as any from their Violence, yet is the most eminent in his Prayers to God for them, and expresseth his Desires and Hopes too, that they will at length be saved §.

§ Vide Rom. Cap. ix. & x.

The same Conduct was observ'd in the next Century, when the *Jewish* Persecutions rose still to a greater height, and notwithstanding their Concurrence with the Heathen Idolaters in the Destruction of many Martyrs, yet they did *Good for Evil*, they render'd *Blessing for Cursing*, and, as ^h *Justin Martyr* assures us, made their Conversion the Subject of their Prayers. The first Believers were not only cautious of doing any rude and oppressive thing to the *Jews*, but they were very tender in giving the least cause of Offence, which is evident not only from their continuing the observance of the Law till the Destruction of *Jerusalem*, but their regard to the *Jewish* Sabbath, and the time of the Passover long after. ⁱ The first Christian Emperors, though Power and Forgiveness do not always go together, yet made some particular Laws in their Favour; they skreen'd them from the Fury of the indiscreet Populace, by careful Edicts, they granted Immunities likewise to their Priests and Rulers of their Synagogues, and went so far, as to provide that none of their ^k Patriarchs

^h Καὶ ἡμεῖς ὑμᾶς καὶ τοὺς δι' ὑμᾶς τοιαῦτα κατ' ἡμῶν ὑπελήφοντας ὁ μισῶμεν, ἀλλὰ ἀχόμεθα καὶ νῦν μετάνοιαν ἵνα πάντες ἰλέως τυχεῖν ᾤδῃ. Ἐν ἀπολάχῃς ἔσονται πολυελεῖς πατρὸς ᾧ ὅλον
Dialog. cum Tryph.

ⁱ Cod. Theodos. lib. 16. tit 8. de Judæis. leg. 2. 4.

^k Si quis audeat inlustrium Patriarcharum contumeliosam per publicum facere mentionem, ultionis sententiâ subjugetur. Ibid. leg. 11.

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should be revil'd and slander'd by indecent Language.

If *Nazarenus* had liv'd in *Honorius's* time, and had spent the least of his reviling Language upon a *Jewish* Patriarch, though of a Religion contrary to the Government, which he hath in this Book thrown upon the *English* Clergy, though professing the same Religion with the Civil Government, he had, as we may hence see, severely smarted for it: but it so happens sometimes, and it looks more like the Charity of our forgiving Profession, that some Christians have been more careful of the Honour and good Name of the *Jewish* Priests, than others are of their own.

Nazarenus therefore, upon a Subject in which the Character of many blessed Martyrs is attack'd, hath not offer'd one reasonable thing; for it appears from the whole, that the Christians have been so far from expelling the *Jews* out of the Church, or refusing any of them admittance, that by all the tender Methods of Peace and Condescension, they have endeavour'd to bring them in, and to make them one Fold under one Shepherd. The Providence of God hath been pleas'd, for the just Punishment of the *Jews*, and the future Glory of the Christian Church, to suffer this their long Rejection; for which none is accountable but themselves. The Prophecies are full both of their Rejection and Restoration, but they express the latter in such a manner,

manner, as to shew they are not to be converted in small Numbers, but all at once, and that not until the Fulness of the *Gentiles* come, which blessed Time God of his Mercy hasten. But in the mean time, if I may talk to *Nazarenus*, upon a Subject which he knows nothing of, the Obstacles to their Conversion are owing to nothing of what he suggests, but, next to their own Obstinacy, to the great Ignorance of most Christians in the *Jewish* Manners and Language, to a mystical and fanciful Interpretation of the Scriptures, which will never convince an Unbeliever; and to the wicked Writings of many such amongst us as *Nazarenus*, whom the *Jews* now, as the Heathens of old, confound, with the true Followers of, and Believers in *Christ Jesus*.



CHAP. XV.

Of Gentile Christianity.

Gentile Christianity being that, which according to *Nazarenus*, prevail'd every where, except among the *Ebionites* or *Nazareans*, he must be suppos'd in defaming that, to abuse the whole of Primitive Christianity; and though he hath said nothing upon

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this Subject, but general and unsupported Railing, yet I cannot pass it by unobserv'd. The Profession that is daily made in our Creed of the *Communion of Saints*, obliges me to vindicate those Saints from the Charge of Novely he lays upon them: If his Meaning is to be understood, though that is generally somewhat difficult, the ^h *fabulous Systems, lucrative Inventions, burthensome Superstitions, and unintelligible Jargon*, that were early substituted, instead of his *Original Plan*, are to be charg'd upon them.

To admit this, one must not only take them for Fools, that would pervert that Faith for which they chose to die, but have an ill Opinion of the Son of God himself, who chose no better Successors of his Power, nor Instruments of his Truth. Not only St. *Paul* is concern'd in this Charge, but the whole Body of Christians, many of which were convert *Jews*, so that the Church was no sooner establish'd, than it was destroy'd. Our Calendar of Martyrs, according to him, is a Register of grave Folly, and they that *are dead in Christ are perished*. There was not a Doctrine receiv'd by the whole Church, during the three first Centuries, that I will not take upon me to defend: I am well satisfy'd, that I do in this defend our most excellent Church, which though it hath not retain'd every primi-

rive Usage, yet receives no Doctrine, nor justifies any Practice that is not so. The Character of the Persons that then liv'd, and the Customs, and the Circumstances of that Time, are a certain Proof that the Christian Faith could not receive any Alterations. The Christians in the three first Ages, were of all others the most unlikely, either in respect of Will or Power, to innovate or pervert their Faith. They were honest, but plain and illiterate Men, and therefore were the purer and the cleaner Channels to convey the Word of Truth; they had not enter'd into any of the Sects of Philosophers of that time, which would have given their Doctrine a foul tincture. The *Philosophers* were deservedly term'd the *Patriarchs of the Hereticks*, since there are few of the Heresies that infested the Church, but came in that way. *Valentinus*, *Basilides*, and *Ebion*, were of some Sects in Philosophy, and by this means brought their own wild Conceits into Christianity. It is very certain, though I am well assur'd some will not believe me, and many will not thank me for asserting it, that the false and lessening Opinion of the eternal Son of God, came from *Platonism*. The Christian Doctrine of the Trinity is so far from being owing to that Philosophy, as some of late have unskilfully thought, that it is very contrary to it; the

i Tertullian. adv. Hermog.

Arian Doctrine is the very Sentiment of *Plato*, who asserts that great Subordination that the *Arians* are so fond of.

Not only the Capacities of the first Christians, but their Will and Dispositions must vindicate them from all wilful Innovations: Could they be in appearance so serious and spiritual, and yet have so much of a carnal Mind, as for Interest, or Humour, to teach a Gospel of their own? could they throw away their Lives upon a Doctrine they themselves had perverted? could they resist even to Blood, for the Confession of that Master, whose Commission they had abus'd? could they in the midst of Tribulation, live in a readiness for, and expectation of Death, and yet do the only thing, that the forgetfulness of it could prompt them to? But above all, could any such vile Purposes be consistent with those miraculous Gifts, that continu'd for many Years after the Apostles? could that extraordinary *Treasure* be trusted to *broken Vessels*? and, could those, who were so much strengthen'd by God's Power, be so little watch'd and directed by his Grace?

But the Discipline of that time is a farther Proof that the Christian Doctrine was handed down pure and uncorrupted. The Church though very early spread over great part of the World, yet continu'd one and the same; the principal Bishops of it held Communion with each other by Letters, which Communion
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was a means either to prevent or to detect any Deviation from the common Faith. By this Means Christianity was not regulated by the philosophical Opinions, or popular Superstitions of any Countrey wherein it was planted, but was uniform and the same every where. It did not borrow its Rites and Customs from the *Gentile* Superstitions of each Countrey, as *Mahomet's* did from *Arabia*, but on the contrary had the same Number of Sacraments, and the same Method of Administration, in the most distant Parts. It was not shap'd by the Climate or Complexion of different Nations, but *Persia* and *Gaul*, *Africk* and *Britain*, leaving their old Rites, all join'd in the same Sentiments and main part of Discipline.

Here it is therefore that I call upon *Nazarenus*, and all his unbelieving Friends, to shew any of the Christian Customs of that time taken out of Heathen Rites. I do here charge him, till he make his Assertion good, with a blasphemous Falshood, in saying, that most of the *Gentile* Converts, that is, the main Body of Christians, for there were few *Jews* converted after the Destruction of *Jerusalem*, gave their bare Names to Christ, but reserv'd their idolatrous Hearts for their native Superstitions. There needs no Answer to be given to this wicked Assertion, but to deny it; for it is certain, that though the *Gentile* Superstitions were different in every Countrey, yet Christianity was every where
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the same; nor indeed could it easily be alter'd. The great Rigour against Hereticks, that some have thought blame-worthy in the primitive Church was worthy of Commendation, for it is an undoubted Argument that they admitted of no new Opinions, when the least Tendency to them was branded by them with Heresy. They were too desirous of standing in the good old Paths, to cut out any By-ways for themselves, wherein to wander from Faith and the Truth.

Their Method of arguing with Hereticks clears up this Matter still farther: for the Issue they join'd with them was upon this Point, whether any such Doctrine had been receiv'd before by any Apostolical Church, for if it had not, its Novelty was the Mark of Error. They did not indeed so dispute in this way, as not to abide by the Determination of Scripture, but as they thought the Doctrine of the Church the best Comment upon Scripture, by making the Dispute a Question of Fact they brought it to a shorter Issue. This is the Method that *Irenæus* and *Tertullian* generally pursue, in their Confutation of Hereticks, and it was, let some Moderns think what they will, the most effectual way to put them to Silence: since Apostolical Practice, where it could be made out, was the best Illustration of Apostolical Writings.

The false Pretences of Hereticks to Apostolical Tradition or Succession, are no Proof
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against the thing it self, but on the contrary shew the Conviction of Truth upon them, who allow'd that Rule but yet misapply'd it. The heretical Boasts upon this Subject are no more sufficient to set the true Use of it aside, than the Abuse of the holy Scripture by Fanaticks and Sectaries, and of *right Reason* by such as *Nazarenus*, are a Proof against the Usefulness of either.

But it is not only easy to prove in Theory that no such Change could be made in our holy Faith, but to prove in Fact that there never was any. And therefore whenever he tells, which I am confident he neither can nor will, what he means by those *fabulous Systems, lucrative Inventions, burthensome Superstitions, and unintelligible Jargon* of primitive Christianity, he shall not want an Answer. But till these cover'd Insinuations be made good by direct Facts, I must tell him he deserves other Treatment. He durst not throw out so many sly Suggestions and Defamations, without Proof upon any Person or Family of Distinction in the Kingdom, as he hath upon the whole Christian Church; but it is happy for him, that impudent Invectives against the Clergy are with some Persons, in spite both of Dulness and Blasphemy, the Mark of Wit, and the Standard of religious Sincerity.

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I have gone through the main Parts of *Nazarenus's* first Letter, and shall neither trouble my self nor the Publick at this time with examining the Impertinencies of the second; it will not be easie to re-capitulate the Aburdities I have already examin'd, in a short compass. He hath attack'd the Integrity of the sacred Canon of Scripture, and the Veracity of the Text in his *Mahometan Gospel*; he hath traduc'd the Character of St. *Paul* in his *Nazaraean Sentiments*; he hath farther taken upon him to defend the Obstinacy, Perverseness, and Unbelief of the old *Jews*, and charges the whole upon the first Saints and Martyrs, who preach'd our Faith with Fidelity, and dy'd for it with Courage; but, above all, he hath given the finishing Stroke to his Blasphemies, in defaming the whole Christian Religion under the Name of *Gentile Christianity*, and making the Originals of our own most excellent Church, and those of all others, superstitious and contemptible.

I hope what I have said is sufficient to set aside these bold Assertions, but if I have not, the Fault is not to be laid upon the Argument, but my self; the Divine Providence that hath made it our Duty to defend the Institution he hath reveal'd, hath beyond all Doubt furnish'd us with Means to do so, though all may not be equally provided. I

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am so well assur'd of the Strength of our Faith, that I question not but, as in the primitive Times, so now, it will fare the better for Opposition, and that the venerable Truths of it will appear by far in better Light, for the weak Objections of such Adversaries.

F I N I S.





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